MIND OVER MATTER
(A Matter Of The Mind)

By
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This book is a translation in English of the Hindi Publication – " Man Ke Jeete Jeet Man Ke Haare Haar", transcribed by Smt. Kunti Jalan from the discourses of param pujya Swami Girishanandji.

This English translation – "Mind Over Matter" is credited to Smt. Purnima L. Toolsidass. Her versatile knowledge of both the English & Hindi languages bounded by her spiritual inclination, has made this divine work possible. This book is especially beneficial for the younger generation worldwide, who do not possess an adequate knowledge of Hindi.

EDITOR'S NOTE

A three day discourse was held in Mumbai, in 2004. It was organized by the Divya Path. The subject was '*Man Ke` Jeete` Jeet, Man Ke` Haare` Haar.'*

These talks, given by Param Pujya Swami Girishanandji, proved to be a beacon of light, showing the way to the confused youth of present times. Learned people requested that they be published in a book form. The request was repeated persistently. The recorded talks were transcripted by the Mumbai-based devotee, Smt. Kunti Dharmchand Jalan. 'Mind Over Matter' is the translation undertaken by Smt. Purnima L. Toolsidass, whose versatile knowledge of English and Hindi allowed her spiritual inclinations to render this service for the benefit of those who are not well versed in reading Hindi.

The book has been sponsored by Smt. Sheela and Shri Ravin Jhunjhunwala, who are extremely dear to Pujya Shri and are completely devoted to him. It was inaugurated on the auspicious occasion of the Pran Pratistha of Shri Rameshwar Mahadev Temple at Jabalpur's Saket Dham Ashram, as an offering for the benefit of the people.

No praise is adequate, for this publication. It is a supremely elevating presentation. Hence, we only pray to the Lord that the devotion to the Lord may be everlastingly felicitous and eternal.

Trustees,
Shri Rajiv Lochan Trust,
Saket Dham, Gwari Ghat,
Daroga Ghat,
Jabalpur.

MIND OVER MATTER

(A Matter Of The Mind – : *Man Ke` Jeete` Jeet, Man Ke` Haare` Haar)*

Discourses by Swami Girishanandji.

The real form of the Lord is Sat (truth), Chit (awareness), Anand (bliss) = Sacchidananda. Despite this, He changes His appearance according to the mental image of His devotees, just like an artist on the Stage.

I may have told you of this incident sometime. There was a Goswami (religious head of a Mutt) in Mathura, of the Vallabhacharya Sect. He worshipped the Lord Shri Krishna in the form of a little Child, calling Him 'Lala'. His love for the child Krishna was so strong, that the Lord would frequently manifest as a child before him. One day, he was walking in Mathura with his beloved Lala, when Lala caught sight of some monkeys, and began to scream, "Monkeys! Monkeys!" in fear. Goswami became more and more harassed as Lala's shouts got louder. You know how quiet Ramji is, and you also know how naughty Krishnaji is! He shouted so loudly that Goswamiji rebuked Him, saying, "There were so many monkeys surrounding You all day long, when You came as Rama. You never shouted then. And today, You shout in fear at the sight of just a couple of monkeys?"

Do you know what Lala did? He gave Goswamiji a resounding slap, and said, "When I was Rama, I was the Emperor, but today I am a little child in your lap. An Emperor does not fear monkeys, but isn't it natural that a child will be afraid, and start shouting, when he sees monkeys?"

The result of our mind is of extraordinary importance, in our culture. The actual result is not necessarily the mental result. The pristine Brahman, which is called the indivisible, or the non-dual in the language of Vedanta, and called the *nirguna* (attributeless) and *nirakara* (formless) Brahman, does not undergo any kind of change whatsoever. After accepting Maya – His power of illusion – He takes on all the forms dear to His devotees, when He wants to Grace them.

Somebody once asked Shri Udiyababaji Maharaj, "Baba, are there many Gods?" Baba gave a beautiful answer. He said, "Son, it is not that there are many Gods. God takes on as many forms as His devotees imagine." I do not know what kind of a feeling you have for the Lord. There are many bhaktas who do not divulge their personal feelings for the Lord. The Lord, however, always takes on the form which the person worships, when He wants to Grace someone. Although this is achieved by the Lord's own powers, is it actually the Lord – or is it the feeling of His devotee – which is responsible for the Lord assuming that particular form? It is the feeling in your mind, which is responsible for the form the Lord takes on, when He grants you His vision. And, all the spiritual experiences people have, are also due to the feelings and mental images held by His devotees. It is the same regarding your interaction. So much so, that the body you have been given is also the result of your emotions and mental attitudes.

Yam yam vaapi smaranbhaavam tyajatyante` kale`varam,

Tam tame`vaiti kaunte`ya sadaa tadbhaavabhaavitah.

Gita 8.6.

(Oh, son of Kunti, this body attains the form which is in his mind at the time when his spirit leaves his body.)

Your next birth will be exactly in keeping with the thoughts you have, when your spirit departs from your body. You would have heard the story of Rajarshi Bharata in the Bhagwat – he remembered the baby deer at the time of his death.

Where did the memory arise? It arose in his mind. So, the result of the mind was that he was born as a deer. Was this not the result of his mind? It was a result of his mental state. The body you have is the result of your mind.

My revered Guruji would sometimes say jokingly, that although nothing in this world is 100% correct, but almost all the men would have been women in their past lives. If you ask why, the answer is because they would have passed away thinking of the men they loved. So, this is the result of the mind.

The difference between men and women is merely physical. There is no difference in their mind or intellect, or in their *antahkaran* (the fourfold mind, composed of mind, intellect, tendencies and subtle ego). There is no difference in the *jeeva* – the soul attached to the individual body – and nor is there any difference in the spirit, their subtle body or causal body. Where, in all these, is there any difference between men and women? The difference is limited to the gross body, and is the result of the mind.

So, the body you have at present is the result of your mind. The vision you have of the Lord before you is also the result of your mind. Even in this lifetime, if you work with full, single-minded concentration – it need not be only meditation – one can see from the face of the person whether he is really bad tempered. Is this not a fact? If someone is 100% greedy, his greed is seen on his face, too. Remember though, that the feeling must be cent per cent. One cannot make out when people are only partially greedy or partially bad tempered. A man who is 100% full of lust, and a man who has a 100% devotion for Hanumanji – one can make out which is the devotee of Hanumanji. You must have seen Pujya Pundit Ramkinkarji Maharaj. A number of people vouch that when he sat in solitude, they could glimpse Hanumanji on his face. My revered Guruji used to say that if a person worships with total sincerity, one can make out who the object of his worship is. These days, there are many popular Yoga and Meditation classes. It is difficult to do proper Dhyana (meditation) for even three minutes. Dhyana is when nothing remains except the one who meditates and the object of meditation. Now, check whether you can do Dhyana for three minutes. It is all very well to say you do meditation for half an hour, but do you

have such exclusive moments, when noting exists for you, except the Lord? Such meditation is very rare – it is seldom achieved. No doubt there would be some people present, who would be having such meditation. However, they will desist from speaking about it, because they have no urge to publicize their devotion. I know that there are such spiritual aspirants. If you can do such meditation for just three minutes to start with, you will see that the next day it will become six minutes, because it brought such intense joy. It is necessary to have the experience of joy. If you succeed in meditating this way for three minutes, you will find that the object of your Dhyana will glimmer before you within a month. What is the cause of this? It is your mind which achieves this result. The world is also the result of your mind. So is the spiritual effort which we call sadhana. The effort is the result of your mind, and achieving your goal is also the result of your mind. So come, ponder deeply upon your mind.

What is this mind of ours, and how can we change it? All the problems and perplexities in the world are not outside us. They are within your mind and mine. Bhagwan Shakaracharya says –

Jeetam` jagat ke`n

Who won the world? *Mano hi ye`n*. The one who won over his mind. The one who wins over his mind gains victory over the world. This is what Bhagwan Shakaracharya says in a question-answer session. But a man loses to his own wife! Shankaracharya explains that when it is said that someone has conquered the world, it does not mean that he used a stick or a staff, and fought the world with it. It means that even when the wife or son create strife, it does not affect the mind. This is the victory over the mind. The victory over the mind is not to throw someone out of his house, or banish someone from the city, or beat people with sticks.

In Maharashtra, there was a Saint called Tukaram. His wife hit him with a stick of sugar cane. She taunted him for not working, and sent him off to do some work and earn some money. Tukaramji went off obediently. He was given some sticks of sugar cane in exchange of his day's labor. Children followed him,

asking for pieces of sugar cane. He had just one stick left when he reached home. His wife was furious when she saw that he had brought home just a single stick of sugar cane. She snatched it and beat Tukaramji on the back with it, saying, "You toiled the whole day, and retuned home with just one stick of sugar cane?" Tukaramji smiled. Oh, he is beaten with a stick and he smiles? What is the secret? The secret is that he has won over his mind, and thus won over the world. Why was he smiling? He said, "You are to be congratulated, my lady. I was thinking, on my way here, that since only one stick is left, I will give you half and have half myself. You did exactly what was in my mind, and broke the stick into half for me." Just think – what a great response that was!

It is also a great Grace, when God gives us a wife or son like this. Maharaja Anga would say, "*Kada patyam varam manye*` - Lord, I am grateful to You for giving me a son like Vena." Why? "Because a bad son gives detachment, and prompts me towards Your worship." These days, we tend to remember every harsh word ever spoken to us. "He was the one who said that to me," we remember years later. Under the circumstances, is that person the cause of your sorrow, or is it your own mind? Will you straighten out every person who says hurtful things, or will you control your mind, so that you are unaffected by what people say? It is the mind you should discipline! Nobody has, till now, achieved lasting happiness by disciplining others. The ones who attained lasting peace were those who learnt to control their minds.

You may pick up the Bhagwat and see for yourself. The Bhagwat is not to be restricted to a seven day's ritual with singing and dancing. It is the art of living; it is wisdom for a fruitful life. You can be highly successful in your worldly interaction, if you study the Bhagwat in depth.

The Bhagwat has an episode, when Dharma (in the form of a bull) asks Prithvi (Mother Earth) what the cause of her sorrow is. Prithvi replies that the cause of her sorrow is the same as the cause of his sorrow. One is amazed to read what Dharma tells Raja Parikshit, about why he is suffering. Raja Parikshit asks Dharma who inflicted such a punishment on him. What an excellent answer Dharma gave to this question! The Vrishabh, or bull, is Dharma incarnate.

“Who has inflicted this punishment on you? Who has caused you so much suffering?” The Vrishabh answered, “Rajan, from which angle do you ask about the cause of my suffering? If you ask from the viewpoint of Vedanta, then both sorrow and joy are an illusion. There is no giver and nor is there any receiver, because there is no duality. If you ask from the viewpoint of Bhakti, then everything is the Leela – the frolic – of the Lord. It is He who decides how to keep whom –

Ishwara sarvabhootaanaam hride`she`rjuna tishthati,

Bhraamayan sarvabhootaani yantraaroodhaani maayayaa.

Gita 18.61.

The Lord uses the power of His Maya to twirl people as He chooses. From the angle of devotion, it is His Leela, and from the angle of Karma, I is the fruit of our actions. Our sorrow is the result of our past actions.”

Four viewpoints explain the four causes of suffering:

1) From the angle of Vedanta, sorrow and joy are mere illusion.

2) From the angle of Bhakti, both sorrow and joy are His Grace in every situation.

3) From the viewpoint of Karma, our own actions are at the root of our joys and sorrows.

4) The fourth cause of our sorrows and joys is our own nature, our natural bent of mind.

You ask, how can one’s nature be a cause for joy or sorrow? I will tell you, through examples.

A Seth (wealthy businessman) came to meet our Pujya Maharajshri (Swami Akhandanandji Maharaj). He had just made a profit of fifty lakh rupees. In those days, it was fifty thousand, but I calculate it as fifty lakhs, as per today's value. The man looked dejected, even though his business had shown this considerable profit. Maharajshri knew about the profit this gentleman had made. He said, "Seth, I have heard that your business is doing well, and you have made a good profit."

"Yes, Maharaj," replied the man, "That is true."

"Then why do you look worried?" asked Maharajshri.

"I have made a profit of fifty lakhs, but my competitor made twice this amount! His profit was one crore!"

This means, that his profit did not make him happy; he was unhappy about the profit made by his competitor! Now, there is no solution for such sorrow, just as there is no solution for death! This is the working of the mind. This is the effect of the temperament. The man's mind was the cause of his sorrow.

Dharmaraj's answer left Parikshit unable to ask anything more about who had inflicted pain on him. This episode is in the first Skandha (Canto) of the Bhagwat; you can read it, if you wish. So, joy and sorrow depend upon your viewpoint of the situation. The same incident can be welcomed as a blessing, or lamented as a misfortune. I generally point this out to people – you have a friend who makes a profit, earns wealth and renown. You feel very happy at his progress. Some years later, you turn into enemies. The world keeps changing – don't be surprised, because the only permanent friendship is with our Ishwara, the Lord Almighty. No other friendship lasts forever. Suppose that ten years later, your friend turns into an enemy. The individual is the same, the action is the same, and he will continue to progress steadily, gaining more renown. However, you will burn with envy and resent the progress of the same person, for whom you once rejoiced. Now, please tell me – is his progress responsible for your joy and sorrow, or is it your attitude responsible for your reaction? It is

your mind, which is the cause. I have no wish to impose upon you, or force you to agree with what I say. I will proceed only when I feel that you agree. Your mind bears the responsibility for your reaction to any circumstance. The subject selected, is actually one half of a couplet written by a Mahatma. "*Man ke` jeete` jeeta, man ke` hare` haar.*" (When the mind is victorious, we are victorious, and when the mind is defeated, we are defeated.) If your mind is positive, you have conquered the world, you have advanced; and if your mind gives up, all is lost. Our Gurudev frequently quoted this shloka:

Rakshatu rakshatu koshaanaamapi kosham hridayam,

Yasmin surakshite` sarvam surakshitam syaat.

The meaning is, "Guard it! Protect it!"

Guard what? What should we protect? Our safe, our diamonds? Gold?

"No, no!"

Then what is it that we should strive to protect?

It is the declaration of our culture – *Rakshatu rakshatu* – a word is repeated, to give emphasis. *Koshaanaapi kosham hridayam.* Hriday means mind. "Guard your mind."

Why?

"*Yasmin surakshite` sarvam surakshitam syaat* – if your mind is safe, then everything precious is safe. If your mind is spoilt, however, then everything becomes useless."

Don't you experience the truth of this? Even if you have all you want, if you go into depression, none of your possessions will give you pleasure. Will you car, your horse, your apartment, your wealth, and your family, make you happy, then? Well – tell me! Will it? No, of course it won't!

I will tell you a story about a Monk. He had nothing at all with him, but his mind was well protected. Perhaps I may have spoken about this before.

Once, someone told our Rotiram Baba, "You talk to us about the Atma-Paramatma every day." Baba said, "Well, my brother, the subject is the same – how can I speak about other things? It is the same point which is propounded by giving different examples. Satsangs (discourses) are held here all the time." If you tell us, preachers, to speak on new topics each time, it is futile to expect this. A gentleman at Delhi told me, "I have heard you speak on the Bhagwat several times. Please speak on something new, now."

I told him, "Please start filling your life with what you have heard till now, then I will tell you about other things."

Is all the responsibility only for us (preachers) to bear? Won't you put in any effort? My brother, let the things you have heard become a part of your life. Only than can you progress.

Look, my brother, discourses always contain new aspects, but if you expect that everything you hear will be novel, and fresh, then that is not possible. It is up to you, to keep absorbing and practicing what you hear. Repetition is important. One never knows which moment in your life will have a predominance of *sattvaguna* (the highest tendency), and you will, in a flash, take in something you heard ten times before, but did not absorb. This is the purpose of listening again and again to discourses, even if the topic is the same. See how happy is the person, who is mentally secure. And, the one who isn't? He suffers from tension and depression. He can neither eat nor sleep – what will all his accumulated wealth be worth?

There was a Mahatma at Vrindavan. He would sing hymns to the Lord all day long, and keep nothing but the bare essentials. Winter approached, and he lay down on the only mat he had, covering himself with the one sheet someone had given him. He lay awake, thinking how nice it would be if Thakurji (the Lord) sent him something to keep him warm in the winter months ahead. Thakurji is

incapable of not granting any wish expressed by His devotee – you can have implicit faith in this. Oh – you cannot deny even your profligate son anything he wants; and if your son is truly worthy, then there is no question of denying him anything. Then, don't you accept that your Thakur is far superior to an ordinary father? He never avoids granting even the smallest desire of His devotee. Take this to be an irrefutable fact. Let any true Mahatma make a *sankalpa* (considered resolve), and see how quickly it comes true! Thakurji keeps doing some Leela – it is His frolic – and a thief came to the Mahatma's hut one night. The door was ajar, and the thief slipped in silently. He left his blanket on the ground, and started to prowl round the hut, looking for things worth stealing. The Mahatma was awake. He had not yet fallen asleep. He thought that the Lord had sent him a blanket, so he got up, and picked up the blanket the thief had dropped. He spread it over his mat, and lay down and covered himself with his sheet. He thanked the Lord profusely, saying, "Prabhu, You made arrangements for my comfort, through a thief! You are truly wonderful!"

When the thief realized that there was nothing in the hut worth stealing, he came to pick up his blanket and leave. He saw the Mahatma sleeping on it. Now this became a new problem for him. Neither had anything valuable come to hand, but he seemed likely to lose even the blanket he had. "If I pull the blanket from under the Mahatma, and he raises an outcry, I will be caught," thought the thief. "If I don't pull it out from under him, I'll lose even my blanket. Well, it is better to lose a blanket, rather than get caught." Disgruntled, he began to slip out of the hut silently. So, no one can say when Thakurji will solve His devotees' problems, or through whom help will be given. Help comes, at times, from the most unexpected sources.

Now, just as the thief was about to leave, the Mahatma decided to make a little joke. He said, "Oh, brother – who is it? just shut the door, as you leave, please." The thief lost his temper, and could not resist saying, "What will happen is another comes? One came, and left his blanket for you to sleep on. If another comes, he will leave a blanket for you to cover yourself with! What do you have which is worth taking, anyway?" The Mahatma laughed to hear this.

Just think of the carefree happiness enjoyed by the Mahatma! It fills the heart with happiness just to think about such joyful Mahatmas. The lives of such Mahatmas would be filled with such a wonderful peace and joy!

One Seth was most persistent in insisting that Pujya Rotiram Baba accept a blanket form him. “Why are you so eager to give me this blanket?” asked Baba. “I have heard, in the discourses,” replied the Seth, “that if a Saint of your stature is given one blanket; it results in our getting a hundred blankets when we die and go to Heaven.” Baba had a hearty laugh. “So, this is the reason you force the blanket on me?”

Please don’t feel offended, but there are people who give ten rupees in charity, because they believe that they will gain a hundred rupees in future. Nobody accepts a transaction where he loses something.

Baba said, “You are giving me a blanket, so that you will get a hundred blankets in Heaven?”

“Yes, Maharaj.”

Baba had a lively sense of humor. Just see how the Mahatmas derive pleasure from every situation. Baba told the man, “Of the one hundred, take one now. I will give you ninety nine when we meet in Heaven.” He did not take the blanket. What is the indication?

Yasmin surakshite` sarvam surakshitam syaat.

If your mind is joyful, if it is light and happy, then, whether you have everything, or whether you have nothing, it makes no difference to your happiness. It is all the result of your mental attitude. All interaction, all the joys and sorrows, all tensions – people these days are so tense – and all the depression, which is so common these days; what is the cause?

The cause is that schools and colleges do not teach us how to develop the right attitude. It is the misfortune of our Nation – please don't be offended, thinking me to be politically motivated – but it is a tragic fact that in the name of secularism, our traditional culture and the values taught by religion, are all removed from our educational system. Secularism means respect for all religious traditions; it does not mean discarding religion! People are taught, these days, how to develop their physique, but is there any school or college, which teaches youngsters how to develop their mind, so that they are better equipped to face life's ups and downs? Well, my brother, are there any classes upon developing will power, so that the mind can remain tranquil in adversity as well as in happiness? This is the misfortune of our people and our country. All this was once taught in the ancient Gurukul system, and this was the secret of the success people had, in their worldly interaction and also in their spiritual lives.

Now, we should consider and understand what the mind actually is, and also how we can keep it healthy and well-balanced. How can we make it divine? In the next three days, we will discuss what the mind is.

The Bhagwat, which contains the essence of the Upanishads, explains the beginning of Creation in a different way. The Parabrahm Paramatma (the Absolute Brahman) is all by Himself in the beginning. Then He accepts His power of Maya (illusion), and this gives birth to the three powers of *kaala* (time), *karma* (action), and *svabhaava* (latent tendencies). The power of Kala caused agitation in Prakriti (the Lord's power of Creation), which then created the three tendencies of *Satva* (goodness), *Raja* (passion and desire), and *Tama* (gloom and delusion). Prakriti is when these three gunas (tendencies) of Satva, Raja and Tama are equally balanced. Then, *Ahankara* was created. Ahankara is the ego, and is of three kinds – Sattvik Ahankara, Rajas Ahankara and Tamas Ahankara (connected respectively to the tendencies of Satva, Raja and Tama). This is a great process. The five elements – space, air, fire, water and earth – were created from the Tamas Ahankara. All the *indreeya* (senses), *buddhi* (intellect), and *prana* (life spirit) were created from the Rajas Ahankara. The

mind was created from the Sattvik Ahankara. You may take up the Bhagwat and read the second Skandha. It states that the mind is created from the Sattvik Ahankara.

What does this mean? Our Shri Maharajshri used to say that this mind of ours is intrinsically pure. When a child who is born into a noble Brahmin family starts doing wrong actions, people say that he has become a Shudra (lowly). In the same way, your mind is born Sattvik. If it contains Tamasik or Rajasik tendencies, it is not the fault of the mind. It is controlled by you and me – you may say that it is controlled by the jeevatma – the Atma attached to the individual – or a human being, whichever you please. It is we who control the mind. Hence, it is we who are responsible if our mind becomes Tamasik. We have attached it to the wrong objects, which is why it has become spoilt and now creates havoc.

You know, don't you, that there are many instances in the history of our Nation, where some political leader encouraged terrorism for their own preservation, and then the very same terrorists kill the leader who supported them? So, whenever you encourage a wrong tendency, it rebounds upon you. Remember that!

You will ask, "Where did I spoil my mind? I go to bhajans (sessions of devotional singing). I do sadhana (effort for spiritual progress), and strive to keep my mind on the right path." You do this, certainly, but for just an hour. What about the other twenty three hours of your day? Just tell me, how many sets of clothes do you possess? Fifty sets, twenty five sets, or more? How many pairs of slippers do you have? Please don't take offence. That is not food for thought – that is food for the mind. What have you attached your mind to? Even though you come to Satsang (religious discourses) for an hour, the rest of your day is spent in minus activity, is it not? So, the plus factor in your life is very small – where will your mind gain the strength of Satva Guna from?

A Mahatma used to say something very beautiful. He would say that ninety percent of the people complain that they cannot control their mind.

Chanchalam hi manah Krishna pramaathee balavaddridham,

Tasyaaham nigraham manye` vaayoriva sudushkaram.

(Gita – 6.34)

Not only did Arjuna place this question, Shri Krishna confirmed it.

Asanshayam mahaabaaho mano durnigraham chalam.

(Gita- 6.34)

You will wonder, "In what way did I spoil my mind?" So, I will narrate an example given by a Mahatma.

You have a little son, and he tells you that he wants a gold chain. Now, one day you tell him to go to the vegetable market, assuring him that he will get a gold chain there. The boy goes there, and searches all day, but naturally, he can not get a gold chain in the vegetable market. How can anyone get a gold chain in the vegetable market?

The boy returns, and says, "Father, I could not get a gold chain there." Next day, you send him to a marble depot. Once again, he returns disappointed.

The third day you send him to a grocer's shop. He sees various items of food, but no gold chain.

Now, if you send him to yet another place, will he go obediently, or will he question your judgment? Well? Will he refuse to go, or will he accept your suggestion meekly? He will quarrel with you, because you misguided him, sending him off to the wrong places. This is an example. Now, come to the conclusion – your life, and mine.

What our mind wants from us is happiness. Is it not this it seeks? Or does it seek anything else? If it desires wealth, it is for the sake of happiness. If it

desires sweets, it is because eating sweets brings pleasure. The garments it desires are also for the sake of the pleasure of wearing them. All the things, people and places we desire – if the motive behind them was to be given in one word – it is happiness. What the mind is actually seeking is happiness – *anand*! Happiness is all it wants.

And, what kind of happiness does the mind desire? Does it seek temporary happiness, or lasting happiness? It desires lasting happiness. And – what are the places you recommend to this mind, which craves lasting happiness? Your mind asked you, "Where will I find happiness?" You replied, "Get a Mercedes car. It will bring you happiness." The car arrived. The mind was happy for ten or fifteen days. After that, is there happiness, or is there tension? There is tension, caused by people who ask to borrow it. Tension with the son, and the brother. Tension about the driver, and his stealing fuel. Think about it and tell me whether the Mercedes brings tension or happiness. Did the mind find happiness in the car? It did not. It was deceived!

Then the mind asked, "Now where can I find comfort?" You said, "Build a house. Build a mansion, or buy a large flat." The flat was readied. A few days of happiness followed. A few parties were held, and people praised the flat lavishly. After that – the plumbing began to give trouble, electrical problems arose, and the AC needed repairing. Each day brought a fresh problem. You can't eat in peace, and you can't sleep in peace! So – did it bring happiness, or did it bring sorrow? You will think, "Swamiji wants everyone to become a Babaji – a monk!" But I am convinced that none of you will give up the world! You are all firm in your convictions – you are the listeners of Prempuri, isn't it?

Our Pundit Ramkinkarji Maharaj was once giving a discourse here, at Prempuri Ashram. The next day, one of the listeners told him, "Maharaj, (verbal) bullets fly in your discourse." Another listener present commented, "It is true, Maharaj, that bullets fly in your discourse, but the audience here is bullet-proof!"

So you said, "Build a mansion," and the mansion was built, but it did not bring happiness. The mind was deceived again.

The third time it asked where it could obtain happiness, you told it to increase your bank balance. That, too, was done. However, does an increased bank balance bring happiness, or does it bring sorrow? There is the difficulty of earning, and difficulty in keeping it securely. Then – who should it be given to? People fear to tell their sons what they have written in their will, incase they are killed for the wealth. If you can't even tell your son, where is the happiness in your life? People quietly make their wills, and hide them away. They feel that it is better that the contents are known only after they have left this world. So, my brother, did you find happiness in wealth? You faced the difficulty of earning it, the worry about keeping it secure, fear of a raid by the Income Tax Department, and the people wanting to borrow money. And then, the question of who to leave it to! I gave you just three examples. You have deceived your mind at least twenty or fifty times – forgive me for saying so. You have shown it places which it had to turn back from. It desires true happiness, but you directed it to places which give only a false, temporary illusion of happiness. Happiness lies in watching TV, getting married, getting a good son. It is amazing! Man is ready to quarrel with God! "You did not grant me a son; I will adopt the son of someone else!" He challenges God, saying that he will adopt a son if God doesn't grant him his own. People adopt a son, and then face such problems that only God can help them! Oh – when the Lord didn't grant you a son, why do you take on this problem? You have mislead your mind so many times! Now, tell me honestly, what is the duty of a person who has been deceived twenty times? When the twenty-first occasion comes, should he listen to you again? You tell me, what should the mind do? Obviously, it should not allow itself to be deceived yet again! Then, why do you lament that your mind refuses to obey you? You see, it is not the mind which is at fault. It is we, who are at fault.

Now see the extraordinary tendencies of the mind. See the mind of a Gopi (a milkmaid of Vrindavan). The Gopi says, "I am fed up!"

"What is your problem?"

“When I go to milk the cow in the morning, I hear my Lala”s voice, telling me to pour a little milk into His mouth. When I direct the flow of milk into His mouth, it spills on the ground, and the pot remains empty! What am I to do?

Then, I clean the floor, and it seems to me that He is repeatedly running over the floor, so I keep cleaning it again and again. My Mother-in-law scolds me for spending so much time in cleaning the floor. She thinks I have gone mad!

Then, I focus my mind to see where Lala is, and I realize He is not in my house, at all!”

Someone asked her, “What are you doing here?”

“I am meditating. If I can push Lala away from my heart for a week or two, my life will become well-regulated.”

So, this is also the mind! You and I have a mind, and so does the Gopi. So, if your mind is not attached to the Lord – don’t take offence at my words – it is because we have turned our minds into terrorists! It will take a little time now, to be reformed. It takes time and patience to reform a child who has become a delinquent.

That means, don’t be afraid. Keep coming to the Satsang. Continue with your sadhana. When your mind gets the right flavor of the Lord, it will become such a servant that you will never be able to find anyone as obedient in the whole world!

How can we make the mind conducive? The mind is Sattvaguni – its thoughts are actually Sattvik, but we have attached it to the wrong place. It desires lasting happiness, and we have placed it in a house of sorrow. We have placed it in this material world. This mind has become your adversary. What is to be done?

There is a story about a saint, regarding the mind. It is given in the eleventh Canto of the Shrimad Bhagwat. It is another matter, that most preachers avoid

speaking about the second and eleventh Cantos. I was quite surprised, when I was invited to attend a Bhagwat at Jabalpur recently. We had been asked particularly to go for the occasion of Nandotsava, when Nandababa celebrates the coming of the baby Krishna. I went with my Teacher, under whom I had studied the Bhagwat. When we arrived, we were told that the Nandotsava would come after one hour. The episode of Prahladji was being narrated when we reached. This was the limit! Prahladji's story is given in the seventh Canto of the Bhagwat, and Nandotsava in the tenth! Shastriji lost his patience. He asked the preacher, "Is Nandotsava really to be held today?"

"Yes, yes, it will definitely be narrated today," replied the preacher.

This means that, though preachers often skip the second and eleventh Cantos because they contain no interesting stories; but that any preacher could skip over the eighth and ninth Cantos was something I had never before come across!

The preacher rested after Prahladji's episode was completed, and there was a session of kirtan (devotional songs). Then the discourse was resumed, the preacher started with the tenth Canto. I decided not to take up the issue. Later on, I asked the preacher which method of narration he followed. He replied, "This is the Hanuman method! It is what is called 'a long jump! It is like Hanumanji jumping over the sea." So I told him, "Only you can do this – such a method is impossible for me!"

So, there is an episode in the eleventh Canto, of a Bhikshu Brahmin, a mendicant. It is a beautiful episode, and gives deep insights into the working of the mind. I am personally very fond of this episode. I will tell you its basic substance.

There is a Brahmin. He lives in Ujjain. He is very wealthy, but is also a great miser. In fact, in local parlance, he was a ¨ÉCJÉÒSÉÚ°É '*makhichoos'*. If a fly fell into the milk, he would squeeze milk out of the fly – one who does not allow even half a drop of milk to be thrown away, is called a makhichoos. This

Brahmin was as stingy as that! I do not say this on my own – it is given in the Bhagwat. You can go home and look it up in the thirty third chapter of the eleventh Canto, if you wish. This Brahmin was so stingy that he did not give proper food to his family, and nor did he eat well himself. There was no question of spending on religious rituals. You are aware that it is written in the scriptures that such wealth does not stay for more than ten years, in one place. Despite being rich, the Brahmin was too miserly to eat properly himself, or let others eat properly. Everyone was inwardly angry, but they were outwardly submissive, because he was so wealthy.

See the state of the world! If a one-eyed man is wealthy, people will welcome him respectfully. However, if he is poor, they will say, "Here comes Shukracharya. It is a bad omen." This importance of Laxmi (the Goddess of wealth) is not a recent phenomenon. It is an ancient practice, ever since Laxmiji emerged. You can read about the churning of the ocean; everybody stopped working, and sat down, as soon as Laxmiji emerged from the ocean. They included ascetics, Mahatmas, householders, Devtas, Danavas and Asuras. This is the importance of Laxmi.

Only the detached Mahatmas and the Lord, Himself, are exempted free of the allure of wealth.

So, as long as he had wealth, people showed respect to the Brahmin, even though they resented him inwardly. So, my brother, don't get carried away by the false respect shown by the worldly people – it is very dangerous. You can never tell when this obeisance will turn into a thrashing! When your bad days arrive, such pampering turns into a punishment. This is why it is stated in the Shastras (scriptures) that you should maintain a friendliness towards a Saint, even if he does not show any inclination to be friendly; and avoid being friendly with worldly people who profess great friendship. This is a formula for life, which is good to bear in mind.

The people who had shown devotion to the Brahmin, and borrowed money from him, refused to return the same, after five or seven years. The King ordered a

raid on his house, and they took away most of his remaining wealth. Then his house caught fire, and whatever was left was destroyed in the fire. The rich Brahmin became a destitute.

Seeing that the Brahmin no longer had any wealth, people vented their suppressed anger. “Beat him! He was very wicked! He was a fool! Neither did he eat, nor did he offer food to others. He destroyed everything!”

The extreme abuse and disrespect caused the Brahmin’s eyes to open to the truth. “Is this what the world is like? It bowed at my feet when I had wealth. Now that I am poor, it is ready to throw me out of the house!”

I generally tell people that if you achieve anything, and you wish to have some spiritual experience, then – be honest. Whatever you are, be true to what you believe in. The Brahmin was honest. When he was a miser, he was a total miser. When he loved money, he loved it a hundred percent. If you love money, love it a hundred percent, and if you love the world, love it a hundred percent. You will say, “Maharaj, what are you saying? We are trapped, as it is!” However, if you are only half trapped, you will remain trapped for many days more – remember these words of mine! I give you full freedom. Apply yourself fully to whatever you believe will bring you happiness, and you will be free of it sooner. But if it is only a half-hearted commitment – people generally accept a compromise, saying that this is the way the world is – then you will not easily be freed. If you tell someone, “The people who fold their hands respectfully to you, criticize you behind your back,” they will say, “That is the way of the world.” Then, remember, you will continue to remain trapped in the world! If you wish to escape, you have to give a hundred percent love to the goal of your choice.

This Brahmin had given a hundred percent love to money, and this lead to his discovering the truth of the matter. The worldly insults he received caused him to become completely detached from the world, without any sadhana. It is amazing! Does greed lead to detachment? One can understand it, if detachment is achieved by doing sadhan-bhajan and bhakti (effort for spirituality, singing devotional songs, and having devotion). Religious rituals can also bring inner

detachment. It is written in the Bhagwat, however, that the Brahmin achieved great detachment. Did you observe how he achieved it? It was because he was true to what he believed in. A person who is honest will turn back to the path to the Lord sooner or later. A person committed to the truth will return to the road which leads to the Satya-Paramatma, because the Atma of all is the ultimate Truth – Satya. Just be true to yourself. You are free to choose where you wish to be, and do what your mind desires, but do it with full commitment. If you love your wife, love her a hundred percent. If you love wealth, love it completely. If you love your son, give him all your love. If you divide your love into ten percent portions, you will remain tied down. However, if you give a hundred percent love to any object, you will be released from worldly bondage. If you don't believe me, you can start tomorrow, and see for yourself. In about a year, you will find yourself free from the object of your love, and then you will see what happens thereafter!

So, the Brahmin achieves detachment, and then he accepts *Vidvat-sannyas*. There is no mention of which Guru he was initiated by, but he becomes a *tridandi* (triple-cane), Vaishnava monk. One assumes this, since this is narrated within the Bhagwat. Do you know what is the significance of *tridandi* and *e`kdandi* (single cane)? The monks of Shakaracharya's sect carry an *e`kdanda*, to signify their belief in the Advait (non-dual) philosophy. The Teachers of the Vaishnavas sect carry a *tridandi*, to signify their belief in the threefold reality of the Jeeva (Atma connected to the individual), the Jagat (material world) and the Ishwara.

This Brahmin took up a danda (a monk's staff), a kamandalu (vessel for food or water) and started to beg for his food. He would eat the food people gave him, and do bhajan (meditate lovingly on the Lord) all day long. He took the vows of silence, as far as the world was concerned. He would not talk to anybody. He would go to a hamlet to beg for food, mix up all the food and wash it in the river, and then eat it. Monks follow this practice to ensure that they do not develop any partiality for any particular item, or flavor. Earlier, the Mahatmas used to have just one earthen pot, into which all the food was mixed up. These

days, when you invite them for a meal, you place ten bowls of different items. It is appreciable that you show them this warm hospitality, but from one viewpoint, it is spoiling the mind of the Mahatma. One should remember this, and avoid offering too many items to an ascetic. The purpose of washing the food in the river waters, was to remove the sour or bitter flavors, and make the food sattvik. So, the monk would wash and eat his food, maintain silence, and live on the banks of the river, meditating upon the Lord. Why? Because he had already had a taste of the bitter world!

However, the world refused to leave him. His enemies found out where he was, and went to him. "When he had money, he cheated the world. Now that he has no money, he has donned the red cloth to cheat God!" they would say. "Beat him!" They would throw stones at him, and spit on him. It is written that they even urinated on him! This is in the main verses of the Bhagwat. They would snatch away the meager possessions he had. No matter what they did, the monk did not resist them in any way. It is amazing! Can you or I behave with such restraint? From where did this greedy man get such forbearance? He was honest. His integrity gave him such renunciation. He knew that he would be trapped if he struggled against the world; or if he gave it any love. He feared the world so much, that he had no wish to either love it, or quarrel with it. He just would not answer anyone, no matter what people said or did. The song sung by this Bhikshu Brahmin is called 'Bhikshu Geet'. This saintly monk said that the world was not the cause of all his sorrows and joys, the cause was his mind. The first verse of his song is –

Naayam jano me` sukha-dukha he`turna de`vataatmaa grihakarmakaalaah,

Manah naram kaaranamaamanti sansaarachakram parivartayed yat.

(Bhagwat 11. 23. 43)

How amazing this is! Have you ever achieved such a stage in your life? A man stands before him with a stick, and the Bhikshu – instead of giving advice to anyone – is content within himself. He tells himself, "It is not this man who is the cause of my sorrow and joy; it is my mind which is the cause of these emotions."

Did Tukaramji feel unhappy when he was beaten by a stick? He did not feel at all unhappy. If being beaten by a stick was the cause of sorrow, he should have been unhappy. However, he did not feel unhappy. So, it is not people who cause sorrow or joy in our hearts.

Many different kinds of people lived in our respected Shri Udiyababaji's Ashram, when he was still alive. Some of them were very quarrelsome, some of them stole the ghee (rarified butter) and other substances, and some caused different kinds of problems. Baba was aware of all that was going on, but he lavished love upon everybody.

One day, someone asked him, "Baba, why do you allow such people to live in your Ashram?" What was Baba's reply? "*Naayam jaano me`*." Listen to the explanation. Baba explained that it strengthened his inner detachment to have such people around him! "There is, then, no likelihood of my developing any worldly attachments. If only good people are present, the Mahatmas – who are kind and simple – may become fond of them," explained Baba. "This is why I deliberately encourage such people to live in the Ashram." Now, see the difference in the view-point.

One Saint has written – *Nindak niyare` raakhiye` aangan kuti chavay.* Keep your critics near your porch – don't keep them at a distance! Why? Because they will keep cleansing you, making you a better person, without your having to undertake any sadhana. They will keep pointing out your faults and weaknesses. Rid yourself of the faults which are there, and for the ones you don't have, let yourself feel happy that you are given a chance to do *tapasyaa* (asceticism).

So – *naayam jano me` sukha-dukha he`tu* – what is the indication? If someone criticizes you, will you let him stay in your house? Will you allow a servant to stay in your house, if he talks ill of you? You won't keep him in your house because you will feel that he is giving you sorrow. But Baba would keep such critics happily, because they increased his detachment. So then, is it people, who are the cause of our sorrows and joys, or is it the way we look at things? It is how we look at things. It is our way of viewing people. A person's criticism cannot cause pleasure, or sorrow – it depends upon the one who is criticized; how he takes it. If that be the case, how can you say that it is the person who criticizes, who is the cause of your sorrow or pleasure? *Nayam jano me` sukha-dukha he`tu* – nobody is the cause of my joy or sorrow.

This Saint has stated six points.

1. People are not the cause of my joys and sorrows.

2. Devtas (demigods) are not the cause of my joys and sorrows.

3. (The word 'Atma' here, is used to indicate the body) A beautiful or ugly body is not the cause of my joy and sorrow.

4. The stars are not the cause of joy and sorrow.

5. Karma is not the cause of joy and sorrow.

6. Time is not the cause of joys and sorrows.

People say, "I am passing through a bad time, but joy and sorrow are not caused by Time.

In the next two days I will elaborate upon these six points, and explain how it is actually our mind, which begins to imagine things which lead to our feeling happy or sad. The time is up, for today, and we will give the talk a rest for now.

MIND OVER MATTER
(2)

Let us return to the same topic, which is so useful a part of our worldly and spiritual lives. '*Man ke` jeete` jeet, man ke` hare` haar*' – we win, when we win over our mind; and we lose the battle of life, when we feel mentally defeated. It is all the paraphernalia of the mind. Our entire world of interaction is the result of the mind. The friendships and enmities we make are the result of our mental attitudes. A person is the friend of someone, and the enemy of another. It is the same person, who is liked by some, and disliked by some. Then – are the good or bad qualities in that man, or are they in your mind? They are in the minds of people. To some, drinking seems a good thing. To others, it seems a very bad thing to drink. The items which you think will give you pleasure, seem good to you; and the items which you think will bring discomfort, seem bad. These pleasures and discomforts are caused by your mind, and so is this world of joy and sorrow.

In the language of Vedanta, the definition of the mind – which was explained so beautifully by our Maharajshri – is that it is the Atma which has got attached to sense objects, which is called the mind – ¨ÉxÉ *mana*. And, the mind which is completely free of all objects of the senses, is called the Atma. This mind is nothing separate. The Jeevatma (the spirit attached to an individual body) is nothing else, but the Brahman which has got attached to individual worldly consideration. The Jeevatma gets surrounded by desire, and is prompted by them. All present here are Vedantis, and the declaration of Vedanta is –

Jeevo brahma iva naaparah.

The Brahman is the Jeeva, and nothing else. If the Jeeva is the Brahman, how did it become worldly? It is because of desires, because of temptations, and because of passions. Hence, the Atma – which is connected to the sense objects

– is called the mind; and when detached from desires and desired objects, it is called the Brahman, or the Atma. The Vedantic literature has defined the mind. If you go to a surgeon, and tell him to operate upon you, and remove the organ called the mind (in the hope of leading a better life), will he be able to comply with your request? Well? Is there any doctor who can remove your mind surgically? Of course not!

Then, what actually is the mind? This is beyond the reach of doctors. The mind cannot be seen. Nobody has, as yet, got a glimpse of it. However, it is this mind which is at the root of all our dilemmas and successes. It is at the root of both – dilemmas as well as success. If it gets focused upon the right track, it brings success. What, then, is the thing called the mind? Where does it stay? People say, 'It stays here.' Well, it is not in any empty space, or in any particular spot. It pervades the whole body.

The antahkaran – our subtle body – is divided into four parts, one of which is the mind. These are *mana* (mind), *buddhi* (intellect, *chitta* (current thoughts), and *anhankara* (the feeling of individuality). This mind is only one part, and it pervades the entire body. What is the meaning of *antahkaran*? It means, *antah kriyate` ane`na vishayaaha* – our Indriyas (senses) are called *bahikaran*, because they have the knowledge of the outer world. And that, which has the inner knowledge – or that, which causes external knowledge to become internal – is called –

Antahkaran – antah kriyate` ane`na.

So, good people, what is the mind? The Vedanta Sara defines the mind thus –

Tat sankalpavikalpaatmako manah.

The mind is that, which makes resolves (*sankalpa*), and raises doubts (*vikalpa*), and it is a part of the antahkaran. The antahkaran has four parts – the Ahankara, chitta, buddhi and mana. One of these – the mana – makes the sankalpas and has

vikalpas. We call this the mind. The antahkaran is one. You can see it this way: If our Girishbhai goes somewhere to give a lecture, he will be called 'the Lecturer'. When he is at home, his son will call him 'Father'. Haribhai, when still living, called him 'Son'. For his friends, he is 'Friend', and for his wife, he is 'my Husband'. The names are changed according to the relationships and actions. However, is the person one, or is he many? It is one and the same person. It is the same with the antahkaran, which is called 'mana' when it begins to make resolves and have dilemmas. It is called buddhi when it starts to take decisions; it is called Ahankara when it begins to think, "I have done this, I will do that". And, when it is steeped in memories or contemplation, it is called chitta.

Tat sankalpa-vikalpaatmakah manah – what is the meaning of the mind? Please understand what the mind is. The mind is extremely subtle, and it pervades the entire body. The cause of your feelings of resolves and dilemmas is called the mind. It is not a tangible object. The Lord Shri Krishna says, in the Gita, "*Manmanaa bhava* – Give your mind to Me." Well, then, brother, is the mind a box of confectionary that one can pick it up and place it at the Lord's feet? From where do we give Him our mind? Is it something tangible, which we can grasp? ¨*Manmanaa bhava* means, 'direct the resolves and dilemmas towards Me.' The Lord advises us to make Him the subject of all the resolves and dilemmas which cross our mind. Let all your mental activities have the Lord at their center. Let all the resolves you make, be connected to Him. "If you have good thoughts, let them be about Me, and if you are in a grumpy mood, you can quarrel with me." The Lord has granted us this freedom. Does any friend give us such permission? How great is the liberty granted to us by the Lord, when He says, "If you wish to praise, praise Me, and if you wish to criticize, let your criticism be directed at Me." Well, my brother, do you know of anyone who gives such liberties to his servants? There is nobody else! How compassionate the Lord is! How much mercy He has! He says, "My son, you have the freedom – I do not compel you to praise Me; I only appeal to you." Just see how tender the Lord's heart is; what compassion and mercy He shows us! He tells us that if we have the capacity to love, we should shower our love on Him, and if we lack the capacity to love – if we have only hatred in our hearts – we should direct our

hatred towards the Lord, not towards the world. How very kind! How very merciful He is!

All right; if someone were to abduct your wife, and then fight with you, and then you have him at your mercy, will you send him to prison, or keep him in a palace? Well, where will you keep him? In prison, of course! And, Ravana had abducted the wife of Shri Rama, and also fought with Him after that, and – what did Shri Rama give him? Did He send Ravana to Hell, or did He grant him liberation form the cycle of rebirth? The whole episode is before you to see. Where will you find a Master like the Lord?

One preacher told me, that when Ravana's physical body died, and he was departing in his psychic body for the Lord's abode, he bowed down to Shri Rama. He was actually Jay-Vijay, (the Lord's gate-keeper, who had been cursed by the Sanakadi sages) and he placed a question before Shri Rama.

"Sir, please tell me, who is the victor in this war?"

"Oh, what a preposterous question! Is there any doubt? You entire lineage was destroyed, and Vibhishana now rules over the Lanka of which you were King. Obviously, I am the victor," said Shri Rama.

Ravana smiled, "No, no!" he said. "I am the victor."

"How is that?" asked Shri Rama.

"As long as I lived, You could not enter Lanka; yet I am entering Vaikunth, while You live!" Who is the victor – Shri Rama or Ravana? Now, you tell me! This raised a dilemma. Up to now, no one had any doubts that Rama had won. However, from the viewpoint of interaction, the Bhakta always emerges the winner, and the Lord accepts defeat.

Manmanaa bhava – does not mean that the mind is an object. You cannot operate upon the heart and remove a portion of it, and offer it to the Lord. Had it been a solid object, you could have handed it over. Since it is the mind, all you can do is to attach its tendencies to the Lord.

Pujya Pundit Ramkinkarji Maharaj used to say something very nice. He would say, "Look, Bhakti does not only mean doing the rosary. It does not only mean chanting praises of the Lord, or the rituals of worship. Bhakti means not attaching ourselves to the world, but attaching ourselves to the Lord, even to the

extent of venting your anger on Him! Our love should, of course, be poured on Him, too."
You will ask, "Maharaj, what is this you are teaching us?"
All right, when the occasion came, for the function of Nanibai's uncle coming for the Bhaat ceremony, with all the gifts, and the Lord Dwarkadheesh Gopal delayed, didn't Narsingh Mehta get angry with Him? Tell me what Narsingh Mehta did – did he worship the Lord with the ritual or Aarti, or did he rebuke Him sharply? What was his reaction?
Narsingh Mehta scolded the Lord! Yes! There is a devotee in Uttar Pradesh. We call him Mamaji – some of the people here may be acquainted with him. He says that when the Lord arrived, Narsinghji turned his back to the Lord! The Gopalji asked, "Are you angry with Me, for coming late, Narsinghji? What have I done, to displease you?"
Just say what Narsinghji says. "My daughter had prepared to commit suicide by the time You arrived! What is the meaning of this? I have been praying since yesterday, and You arrive so late that it is nearly afternoon?! Was the Giddharaj your Uncle? Was Shabari your elder Aunt? You went to them uninvited. And for me – despite my calling You so fervently, You delayed so much in coming?"
Gopalji said, "Just see how long is the list you sent Me, Narsinghji – shouldn't I be granted a little time to gather all the things?"
Narsinghji said, "Look, don't give me all these excuse! You don't need any time for making arrangements." He was really angry with the Lord. This gives pleasure to the Lord. The Lord loves to tease and joke with His devotees.
One of the qualities which the Saints possess, and is well known, is that they all love a good joke. They have a great sense of humor. Why? They enjoy a good laugh because there is no tension in their lives. It is the same with the Lord. However, who can the Lord joke with? His devotees, or with the world? He can only joke with His devotees. The Lord enjoys the devotees who not only shower their love on Him, but also tease, and quarrel with Him once in a while.
What does this indicate? It indicates that just as when the Lord plays a joke – or showers His love – it is with His devotee; similarly, it is our duty to shower our love on the Lord, and also make Him the subject of our fun or anger. You will

be happy if all your tendencies are directed towards Him. When you give your love to the world, the result is sorrow; and it also results in sorrow when you quarrel with the world. Both love and hate cause sorrow, when the world is their object. However, when attached to the Lord, both become causes for happiness.
Let us return to the main topic – the mind. The implication of giving it to the Lord is to attach our mind, and everything in it – completely and totally – to the Lord. Let all your mental tendencies and inclinations circle around Him.
Let us elaborate a little more upon this shloka, which the Bhikshu Brahmin spoke, during the most adverse situation. Shri Krishna has given Arjuna the example of the extraordinary nobility of the Bhikshu Brahmin. Shri Krishna has narrated this episode in the eleventh Canto of the Shrimad Bhagwat. He says that very few people possess such a deep tolerance, and one should study the reflections such people have, upon the workings of the mind.

Naayam jano me` sukhadukhahe`turna de`vataatmaa grihakarmakaalaaha,
Manah param kaaranamaamanti sansaarachakram parivartaye`d yat.
(Bhagwat 11. 23. 43)

Six points have been mentioned, which most of us consider to be causes of sorrow. We tend to blame the demigods – the Devtas – when there is a famine, torrential rain, fire, or some other calamity. Or else, we blame the Atma (which has many meanings), referring to the Brahman (without attributes), to the Ishwara (God with attributes), our body, or even the stars.
Somehow, these days people seem to have a lot of faith in astrological planets. I generally visit South India once a year. The main temples there are generally dedicated to the Goddess Meenakshi; but whichever temple there is, there is generally a temple alongside, which is dedicated to the Navagrahas – the nine astrological planets which affect the horoscope. I was surprised to note that people may forget to go to the Meenakshi temple, but nobody forgets to go to the Navagraha temple!
Yesterday was Saturday. It so happened that straight after the talk, I went to the Hanumanji Temple on Picket Road. On the same road, there is a temple dedicated to Shanidev (the demigod Saturn). I saw a long queue of people, all

carrying oil to offer Shanidev. Please don't mind my telling you this, but the queue at Hanumanji's temple was much shorter! Far more people wanted to pray to Shanidev, than to Hanumanji! Why was it so? People these days are much more troubled by the grahas (astrological planets). They say, "Shani has affected me." "Ketu has affected me." "I am under Rahu's influence." All these are causes of sorrow, aren't they? However, the thinking of the Bhikshu Brahmin is quite different. Now comes 'karma'. Karma is considered to be the cause of a person's joys and sorrows. This is what the ÊVÉYÉÉ°ÉÖ *jigyaasus* (those wanting to understand spiritual philosophy) are told at first.

Jo jasa karehin so tasa fala chakhaa.

However, this Bhikshu Brahmin does not even consider karma to be responsible for the joys and sorrows which come to us. Nor does he blame the stars. People say, "What can I do? I am going through a bad time." The Bhikshu Brahmin refutes this theory. "Then, what is the cause for these?" He says –

Manah param kaaranamaamananti.
(Bhagwat 11. 23. 43)
Param kaaranam manah aamananti – according to the Bhikshu Brahmin, it is only the mind, and none other, which is the cause of our joys and sorrows. Now, let me elaborate a little upon this, and tell you how all these seeming causes are not the real causes; and how the mind is the only cause of our sorrows and joys.
Yesterday, Shri Girishbhai's wife asked if I would explain how the mind can be made to meditate. I told her that I would certainly do so. I will speak about all the aspects of the mind.
There are two or three methods we have. *Doshaapanayan* (removal of faults) is the first step. The faults which are embedded in our heart, must be removed first of all. When the heart is empty, then place something in it. Oh, if a vessel already has something filled in it, and you pour something more into it, will it enter the vessel, or will it spill out? Well, tell me, what will happen? It will spill out. So, we must first empty our minds by removing the faulty thoughts we have filled in it.

I told you yesterday, that people are not the cause of our joys and sorrows. I had cited the example of critics. Sages consider critics to be the cause of happiness, though ordinary people consider them to be causes of distress. So, then, is it really the critic who is the cause of joy or sorrow? There is no such thing as a critic. It all depends upon what our mind considers it to be. If our mind tells us that criticism leads to joy, then it makes us happy when someone criticizes us. If we are convinced that it will cause us distress, then we will feel unhappy whenever anyone makes an adverse comment. A number of people are wary of those who praise them. They know that such people flatter us to please us, and get some advantage from us. Some people are delighted to receive praise, and this becomes their weakness. The people who make their living by flattering others know that they have this weakness, and they exploit it to the full. They lavish praise on people – *varunastvam indrastvam* – and make them do whatever they want. So, tell me – is praise a cause for sorrow, or is it a cause for joy? A spiritual person will be alert when anyone praises him extravagantly. It will distress him to receive lavish praise and flattery. On the other hand, a worldly person will be filled with pleasure if anyone praises him. He will feel pleased with the person who praises him. So then, is praise the cause of their pleasure or distress? It is not. If your mind considers praise to be pleasant, then it gives pleasure; and if the mind is convinced that praise is harmful, it will cause distaste.

All right, what if someone begins to give you abuses? Will you feel happy or sad? Well, tell me! Tell me in general, what your reaction will be. You will feel sad, won't you? Why just you – even I will have the same reaction. Those of us who sit on a platform, posing as great sages and saints, we retain this image only when we receive courtesy and respect. People garland us and say good things about us. Yes, don't mind my saying so, but – if, just one day, we are not garlanded or given a proper seat, then all our Vedanta will evaporate the next day! I know of many such people.

So, this criticism, and verbal abuse, is unpleasant for everybody, in general. However, I will narrate a true story. I had gone to Amarkantak. On the way, there is a place called Mandaka, which is predominately habited by backward tribes. A Mahatma lived there – a great ascetic and renunciate. At that time, his

age was a hundred and ten years old. He lived in a hut, on the bank of the river Narmada. People suggested that I go and meet him, and get his blessings, and I went to do so.

The rule for seeing him was to first sit outside for one hour, singing devotional songs, and then enter his hut. Just see the methods the sages have, for getting people attached to the Lord! It was written there, "You may enter only after spending one hour outside, singing devotional songs." Since we were in a hurry, I entered without adhering to this stipulation.

The Mahatma came to know that I had disobeyed the rules. "Didn't you read the Notice which says that must do kirtan for one hour before entering?" he asked.

"Maharaj," I said, "I did read it, but I have to go to Amarkantak, and the bus will not wait for me. There is no other way I can reach, and I had a great desire to get a glimpse of you, which is why I came in directly."

"All right, never mind," he said, "You can do the stipulated singing when you reach Amarkantak." Then we had some discussions, and he told me of a beautiful method for saving ourselves from the world.

"My Guruji lived at Amarkantak," he narrated. The Mahatma's age was a hundred and ten, so the Guruji must have lived many decades earlier. "I was still a spiritual aspirant. I had left my home to become an ascetic and sing devotional songs and attain the Lord. My Guruji lived at Amarkantak. When I went to him, he was happy to see my sincerity and eagerness in serving him with devotion. Now, since Guruji was running an Ashram, I had perforce to help him. When he went away for Chaturmasa (the months of monsoon), he gave me the keys of the storeroom. All the ghee, sugar, rice, and other items were stored there. He made me 'Master of the Stores', because he knew that I was honest. It now occurred to me, that if I manage the store well during this Chaturmasa, I will be put in charge of the stores every year."

Do you understand his method? The Mahatma was a very capable person. He said, "The method I thought of, was that I will have to do something to ensure that I am never again given this responsibility. The Guruji had gone for two months, and I started ordering bhandaras (community feasts) every day. All the visiting monks were offered kheer and malpua and other rich dishes every day. When Guruji returned, he was dismayed to see the empty stores. He told me, 'I

put you in charge because I thought you were honest – and you emptied everything?'" The Mahatma narrated all this very humorously. He said, "My Guruji got so angry with me that he started abusing me at 5 am – earlier, Mahatmas used a lot of bad language – and I just hung my head and kept quiet, smiling to myself." I'm telling you about this episode because although abuses tend to make us sad, this Mahatma was smiling. Abuses did not cause distress, because he knew that he was on the verge of attaining what he wanted. The Guruji's abuses meant that the Guruji was displeased, and the result of his displeasure would be that the Mahatma would never again be given the responsibility of the store. Just think of it! Because his mission was accomplished, the Mahatma was happy to hear bad words! He heard the abuses for a full hour, without saying a word. Not getting any response, the Guruji said, 'You seem to be Gandhiji's uncle – you don't even talk back when I abuse you!'

"When Guruji stopped speaking, I lifted my head, folded my hands, and said, 'Guruji, I can speak only when your 'good morning' session ceases! You began speaking at 5 am, abusing me without a pause, and it is now 6 o'clock!'

'Go away from here! You emptied the entire stock of food! Never return to this Ashram!' said Guruji. I bowed down to him, and said, 'All right, Guruji', and came away."

What does this indicate? That abuses normally cause distress, but if our mind accepts them as positive, they do not have the capacity to make us unhappy. Did the Guruji's abuses cause any distress to the Mahatma? No, they aroused gladness in him. It all depends on the spirit with which you receive them.

Look – the incidents in our lives are commonplace. They are not lofty talks about higher worlds or profound meanings of Vedanta. All your worldly interaction and spiritual progress depends upon your mind. It depends upon how you view the different incidents in your life. The Saint was happy even while being abused. Just think of it – he was a hundred and ten years old when I met him, and he must have been about twenty or twenty five when the incident happened. Yet, the mischievous smile which played on his lips, as he narrated the incident, would have been the reflection of his smile when he was being abused by his Guruji! This indicates –

Naayam jano me` sukha-dukha he`tuh.

No person is the cause of happiness or sorrow. The mind is the cause. So, my brother, have you understood the point? Now, if someone abuses you, will you feel sad or will you feel glad? Come – we'll see that tomorrow.
The next point is that since a person is not the cause, it is the Devta who causes our sorrows and joys. The people in Bombay get worried if there is no rain. "The taps will run dry. We will be asked to vacate the city". The ritual worship of Indra Devta – the demigod of rain – is started by many. Now, you tell me – does the Indra Devta give happiness or sorrow? No, he is not the one who gives gladness or distress.
There is an episode in the Bhagwat. Indra accepted Vishwaroop – the son of Tvashta – as his Guru. He asked Vishwaroop to undertake several great Yagyas. Vishwaroop told Indra about the Narayana Kavacha (the protective armor of Narayana). Strengthened by this armor, Indra defeated the demons and regained his Kingdom of Heaven.
Later, Indra saw Vishwaroop give ablutions in favor of the demons, and cut off his head. This is the characteristic of a selfish man. Indra made Vishwaroop his Guru when he needed his help, and when he no longer needed his help, he cut off Vishwaroop's head! Who did this? It was Indra. So, it is not that Heaven is something very great – don't be misguided into thinking that it is a great place. Everything that happens on earth, happens in Heaven, too. There are no great benefits in heaven. In fact, I believe that it has a great disadvantage. Here, on earth, you can avail of Satsang (religious discourses) and sadhana (effort for spirituality), and progress towards enlightenment. In Heaven, even that is not possible. A person who goes to Heaven can to nothing but enjoy the fruits of his accumulated merit. A soon as the merit is used up, he has to fall again into the cycle of rebirth. Even in present times, people don't easily cut their Guru's throats! Indra, however, did just that – the story is given in the main text of the Bhagwat. This angered Vishwaroop's father, Tvashta. He organized a great Yagya, and – *indra shatrorvivardhasva svaaha* (may Indra's enemy grow) – is the fruit he asked for. The demon Vritrasura is born, but a slight mistake in the pronunciation resulted in the result being reversed.

However, the reason I speak of this, is to ask you whether it is the Devta who gives sorrow or joy. For Tvashta and Vishwaroop, Indra was a cause of sorrow. He slit Vishwaroop's throat. When the same Indra faces Vritrasura on the battlefield, and sees Vritrasura's enormous strength, he feels afraid. When Vritrasura tells Indra, "Why do you stand there, gaping? You have the Vajra in your hand – use it! It will not fail, because it contains the power of the bones of the sage Dadhichi. It contains the power of the resolve of the Lord Narayana. It will not be futile – use it!" Still Indra does not use the Vraja. The Vritrasura eulogizes the Lord at length, standing on the battlefield, awaiting death. He speak with deep devotion –

Maamanusmara yudhya cha.

Vrindavan's Swami Satyanandji says something very nice. He says, "The Gita is the essence of the Upanishads, and the commentary of the Gita is the Bhagwat." What a beautiful association! '*Maamanusmara yudhya cha'* – Shri Krishna tells Arjuna, "Remember Me, and fight your battle!" However, He did not explain how both activities can be done simultaneously. If you want to see the perfect example of *maamanusmara yudhya cha*, then look up the episode of Vritrasura in the Bhagwat. Indra stands before him, holding the Vajra, about to kill him – he stands like Death incarnate – and Vritrasura goes into a samadhi, immersed in thoughts of the Lord. Why? Indra is holding himself back, not striking, and Vritrasura prays to the Lord, "Lord, I know what the result of this war will be." He is talking to the Lord in his imagination – he is such a Bhakta! Our mind doesn't connect with the Lord even in a closed room, and Vritrasura's mind is immersed in the Lord even while surrounded by huge armies, in the middle of battle. "Lord, I know how this war will end." Then, as though the Lord asked, "How will it end?" Vritrasura said, "Indra will be victorious, and I will be defeated."
Oh, you are such a great devotee, and yet you say that you will be defeated? Will your God not grant you victory?
Vritrasura smiles, and says, "My Lord will grant me the greater good – he is too generous to give the smaller thing to me. The one who wins will get Heaven.

Even if I win, that is what I will be given. If I am defeated, however, I will get to live at the feet of my Lord." The Lord gives the greater gift to His Bhaktas – not the lesser things. The verses spoken by Vritrasura in praise of the Lord are called the 'Saptashloki Bhagwat.'

Ajaatapakshaa iva maataram khagaaha
Stanyam yathaa vatsataraaha kshudhaartaaha.
(Bhagwat 6. 11. 26)

Vritrasura says, "My Lord, my condition is like the baby bird in the nest, whose wings have not yet unfurled. He longs to meet his mother, but can't fly to her. His mother has to come to him. Just as a newborn calf – whose mother has gone to the woods to graze – thinks of her all day long, but has to wait for her to come and feed him….." Vritrasura loses himself while praising the Lord. Indra is amazed to see this. What does this mean? Indra – who is a Devta – is the cause of sorrow for Tvashta and Vishwaroop, but is the cause of happiness for Vritrasura. Vritrasura is so deeply immersed in love for the Lord that he awaits the coming of Indra's Vajra. "Indra's Vajra will cut off my head, and I will be released from this body, and then I will come and abide at Your feet," prays Vritrasura.

Now, is death a cause of sorrow or joy? Tell me! Vritrasura sees death, at the hands of Indra, as a source of happiness. For Tvashta, death was a source of sorrow - also at the hands of Indra. Now, you tell me – Indra was the cause of death for both. He cut the throats of both Vritrasura and Vishwaroop. Vritrasura rejoices, but Tvashta and Vishwaroop are both filled with grief. So – is the Devta to blame, for a person's sorrow or joy? Or is it the mental attitude? The Devta is not the cause. It is just that you have to change your attitude. This is all I wish to say, in these three days. "Positive thinking" is needed.

I was watching some channel last night – relayed either from Surat or Ahamedabad. A doctor was talking about how negative thinking cause great damage to the unconscious mind. Not only is the person who thinks negatively harmed, others round him are also harmed. The doctor emphasized the importance of positive thinking. It is all a matter of the mental attitude, whether

the thinking is negative or positive. The world revolves round this. Why do you feel unhappy when death comes close? Think that the time has come for you to meet the Lord.

You must have heard the story of Prithu, which is given in the Bhagwat. When the Lord manifested, He told Prithu to ask for a boon. “I desire nothing,” said Prithu.

“Then, let Me leave,” said the Lord.

“No, No! Don’t leave! I will ask for a boon.” Prithu thought that asking for a boon will result in the Lord staying a little longer near him. Do you know what boon Prithu asked for? Prithu said, “For as long as I live in this world, let me have ten thousand ears.” Just imagine the state of Prithu’s mind! What love he has for the discourses of the Lord!

“What will you do with ten thousand ears, Prithu?” asked the Lord.

“Listening to discourses about You with just two ears does not satisfy me,” replied Prithu. “I will listen to discourse upon You through ten thousand ears, and – when I leave this body, I will come to Your abode. This is my unshakable resolve.”

“Why?”

“You are my Father, and my Master. Where else will the child go, if not to his Father’s house?” How firm Prithu’s faith is! He never asked the Lord where he would go after death. He stated that he would go to Vaikuntha.

Do you have such faith? If you were asked, “Where will you go, when you die,” will you be able to give an answer? Do you have the feeling of relationship with the Lord, which gives you the ability to say with conviction that you will go to Vaikuntha, or Goloka, or Saket? Prithu said, “After leaving this body I will come to You at Vaikuntha, and please grant me one boon for that time.”

“What boon do you want for that time, Prithu?”

“I want the service of Your feet.”

“What sort of boon is this?” asked the Lord. “I always like to be with My Bhaktas. Where is the problem in your serving My feet?”

Prithu replied, “It is no problem for You. However, there is one lady servitor of Yours there. Laxmiji.” Servants begin to quarrel; it happens even in the abode of the Lord! It used to happen even at our Maharajji’s place. There was one

Choteji and one Dadaji. If Choteji spread a bed sheet for Maharajji, Dadaji would come and take it off, throwing it aside, and spread another bed sheet on Maharajji's bed. It was love, which prompted them, but it is a quarrel, too! So, Prithu said, "Lord, there is no problem for You, but the Goddess who serves You there, is Laxmi. It is certain that there will be a dispute between her and myself, because we both desire to serve Your feet."
"What are you trying to say?" asked the Lord.
"What I wish to say, Lord, is this: You please grant me this boon first. If someday, there is a quarrel between Laxmiji and myself, about who is to serve You, You will favor me. Please finalize this now."
What love! What devotion! The Lord's eyes filled with tears.
What does this indicate? See how Prithu imagines his death. Does death seem frightening to him, or does it seem something to look forward to? It makes Prithu happy, to think about his death. And, what about us? If some Pundit were to bluff us, saying, "You will die after six months," fear and depression will reduce us to half within three months!
Now, then, tell me – does death bring sorrow or joy? Death doesn't bring either – your reaction depends upon your attitude. The whole matter rests upon your state of mind. It is said that the Devta is not the cause of sorrows and joys, and nor are any of his actions.
Then the next cause – Atma, or God. Can the Lord be a cause for sorrow? See – the Lord narrated the Gita to Arjuna. Arjuna's misconceptions were removed. Sanjay narrated it simultaneously to Dhritarashtra, but did it succeed in dispelling the delusion of the blind King? Dhritarashtra's delusion increased! It was the same Gita, it was the same person who spoke it – Sanjay was merely the medium of communication. This is the mental picture, the point of view held by the mind. What did Dhritarashtra think? What conclusion did he reach, after hearing the entire Gita? Arjuna said –

Nashto mohah smritirlabdhaa tvat prasaadaanmayaachyuta.
(Gita 18. 73)

And, what was Dhritarashtra's reaction? Dhritarashtra says, "Sanjay, see the problems Shri Krishna has created!"
What problem?
"Arjuna, poor chap, was such a good-hearted person. He was ready to live on alms. He was prepared to go to the Himalayas for ascetic worship. He was not at all willing to fight. Krishna roused him and encouraged him to fight."
What comment can you make, on Dhritarashtra's summing up of the Gita? The preaching is the same, but where did the difference show up? The difference is in the minds of Arjuna and Dhritarashtra. Arjuna listens as a disciple, while Dhritarashtra listens from the angle of an enemy. Their ways of listening are different; their frame of mind is different; their antahkarans are different.
You will, yourself, accept the fact that there is nobody in the external world who gives you sorrows and joys. And, the biggest dilemma we face today – the reason for all the tensions and depression – is it because of our own inner selves, or is it because of the external factors? Well, my brother?
Just now you say it is because of our own mind, but if that is so, there should be no tension! Does it create tension when we bite our tongue? And, if someone else boxes us, what then? Is there tension, then? So, all the tension and depression is caused by others, not by ourselves. And yet, our scriptures state that the cause of our sorrows and joys is only the imagination, and nothing else.
Now, you decide. If you are the cause of your sorrows and happiness, why are you unhappy? Remain happy. Let your mind dwell on the right things. See every situation in a favorable light.
Oh, someone came and bowed down. One person will think that he is very respectful and courteous. Another will think that he is cunning. He wants something, so he is trying to please. My brother, the one who had a positive reaction had a few pleasant moments. Time will reveal what the man really is. His respect may be genuine. However, the mind of the suspicious man was sullied right from the start. A perfect example is a glass. One person says that it is half full; another says that it is half empty. This is the only difference. The one who considers the emptiness will have tension, and the one who sees the fullness will be relaxed. However, the meaning of both comments is the same;

both are correct. The glass is indeed half empty and it is also half full. The difference lies in the words chosen to describe it.
Our manner of speech has a great impact. Doctors and scientists are proving this now; our scriptures proved it long ago. So, always think favorably. Face the situation, even if you know it to be the Leela (frolic) of the Ishwara. If you are a Vedanti (believing in non-dualism) then there is no dilemma at all.
However, here the mind is being called the cause of everything. It is your mind, which is responsible, and you accept this fact. No Devta is the cause of your joys and sorrows. The Atma, or the Leela of the Ishwara – what does the Ishwara do?
One year, there was no rain in our village. There was a drought. I lived at home, in those days – I was about twelve or thirteen years old. See what the villagers say. A man entered our house, and told my Father, "I can't find this God; else I'd have taught Him a good lesson!"
"Why?"
"He is not sending rain! The crops have all dried up – I have taken a loan, to buy the grain for sowing!"
What does this mean? That God gives sorrow? There is one devotee who is sent poison, in the name of the Lord Giridhar. And, she welcomes it. Wasn't Meera told that it is the water in which the Lord's feet had been washed? Was she told that it was poison? Do you really think that a Bhakta can't differentiate? Amongst the ten characteristics of a Bhakta – described in the twelfth Chapter of the Gita – is 'daksha'. Daksha means clever, skillful. A Bhakta is not a fool, keep that in mind. It is a different matter that Bhaktas frequently pretend to be fools, to save themselves from the world. And, truly, this is an effective method for protecting themselves. If you wish to progress on the path to the Lord, don't let the world see how intelligent you are. If you let the world get a glimpse of your competence, you'll get caught in the world – the worldly people won't let you go. Till when? Till you are of some use to them. At the end, the world will leave you. So, the intelligent thing to do is to leave it first.

Antahi tohi tajainge` paamara too na tajai abhim te`.

Since it will ultimately be left, why not leave it now?
So, some people believe that God never does good for anybody! They blame Him, saying, "What has happened to God? How can God do such a thing?" Many people come to me when they face adverse circumstances.
There was a Bhakta at Jabalpur. He was an atheist. He didn't believe in God. His wife started the nine-day ritual of reading the Ramayana. It was during the nine days of the lunar month of Chaitra. The man kept resisting, but his wife was religious, and she persuaded him to sit for the ritual. Thakurji is full of Leelas! Sir, the very day the reading started, the man slipped in the bathroom, and fractured his foot. He began to shout from the bathroom. He didn't say that he had hurt himself. He didn't tell people to send for a doctor. He started shouting that the reading of the Ramayana should be stopped at once!
"I told you not to have this ritual – you started the reading, and see – I fell down the same day!"
Now, what will you do? As far as he was concerned, God was the cause of his sorrow! Now see – the situation is the same. The wife said, "Just think that had we not started the reading, your fracture would have been a major one." That is another way of thinking, isn't it? The point is how the difference in their perspectives affects their reaction to the incident.
Remember that there will be situations in your life, which are caused by your *praarabdha* – the result of your past karmas. There will also be super natural factors, causing different degrees of pleasure or discomfort. The Ishwara will have His Leela. You can not prevent any of these incidents or events. You can, however, curtail the sorrow or happiness they are likely to generate. This is within the control of your mind. The poison may come, but you have the capacity to retain your happiness, if you want. You may be insulted by someone, but your reaction to the insult is in your hands – not in the hands of the one who insults you – remember that!
Then, neither the Atma, nor the Paramatma, are the cause for your sorrows and joys.
Now, it is turn of the grahas – the stars. The stars generally mean Shanishchara and Mangal. People these days worry a great deal about the future. My God! I once met a lady. I was traveling in a train. It was getting late. I had finished my

bath, and was doing japa. The lady – a total stranger – sat on the opposite berth, watching me. She may have seen the rosary in my hand and thought that I may have some knowledge of astrology.
"Maharaj," she said, "Do you know the solutions to problems?"
I replied, "Maharaj is facing a problem himself – that is why he has to run away from his home!"
Now, whether her problem was solved or not, is another matter, but she had a hearty laugh. I said, "If I didn't have a problem, would I be traveling like this, from door to door?" She asked no questions about the Lord, or about Dharma. She only wanted to know about 'problems' – meaning, she wanted a palmist to read her palm, the lines on her forehead, or her horoscope. She wished to know if I knew these sciences. It becomes very difficult to escape from such people.
What does this indicate? They say, "A particular star is unfavorable. The Shanishchara is affecting me."
Do you know, once the planet Shanishchara went to the Lord Shankar, saying, "It is time for me to come to you."
"What will you do, by coming to me?" asked the Lord Shankar.
"I don't know whether I'll do something or not," replied Shanishchara, "but it is my rule to go to the house I am scheduled to go to. Now it is time for me to come to your house."
"Very well," replied Lord Shankar. He told Parvati to go to her father's house for some days. He told his mount, Nandishwara (the bull), "Go to the woods for some days, and graze peacefully." He sent off Ganapati and Kartikeya to do their work. Then he sat in deep meditation, saying, "Come, Shanishchara. You can spoil only what I have. I have no wife, no son, no Nandi – what will you spoil? Sit here peacefully." Will Shanishchara stay there?
Another point. There is an excellent astrologer in Vrindavan. He said that the influence of Shani is not always harmful for everybody. It is also a cause for progress. Even in this, it is the mind which is responsible for most of the great saints leaving their homes to seek God. The gentleman mentioned Anandmayi Ma. He was associated with monks and sages, and usually managed to get a look at their hands or feet. He had a good knowledge of astrology, although he was not a professional.

Shri Hathibaba lived in Vrindavan, and this gentleman stayed with him. He had a chance to see the lines on Baba's feet. He requested Baba to allow him to see his hand. Baba smiled. He understood that the man is interested in astrology. He said, "All right, see it." The man saw the hand, and said, "Baba, I am unable to understand. Is my knowledge wrong, or is your lifestyle wrong?"
"Why?" asked Baba.
"The lines of your hands and feet indicate the lifestyle of a King. Yet you are living as a carefree renunciate, in a little hut." Baba smiled. "You have studied astrology," he said, "but you have not understood how to tally it."
"How is that, Baba?"
"You have understood that the lines indicate that I should live like a King. What do I seem? Birlaji comes to bow to me, Singhaniaji comes to bow down to me – oh, I am the King of Kings! Does the palace or fort make a King, the King?"
The gentleman was a noble person. He saw my hand one day. "Shanishchara is the cause of your leaving your home," he told me. I had a long period of the effect of Shanishchara. Perhaps it continues to this day – I do not know.
This means that Shanishchara is not always malevolent, it can also cause progress. Well, let us accept that the effects are bad – I'll show you a way out. Start singing the praises of Hanumanji. Shanishchara is very scared of Hanumanji. Why? He had gone to Hanumanji once, just the way he went to Shankarji. Hanumanji picked up a huge mountain, and placed it on his head. Shanishchara began to shout in panic. "Help! I'm crushed! I'll die!" Hanumanji said, "I won't release you."
"What can I do, to be freed?" asked Shanishchara.
"Take a pledge that you will never trouble my devotees," said Hanumanji. Shanishchara made this pledge, and Hanumanji released him. So, you will see that usually, Hanumanji's temples and Shanishchara's temples stand close together. If you think that Shanishchara is affecting you adversely, start singing devotional songs to Hanumanji. Don't show disrespect to Shanishchara – he, too, is a Devta, a star. Bow down to him, but not because you consider him to be greater than Hanumanji. The greatest of all is our Thakurji, under whose eye all the stars and planets revolve.

Now tell me, was Shanishchara helpful for me, or was he harmful? It was a good influence. Was he beneficial for Anandmayi Ma, or did he harm her? You concede that he was beneficial. So, it is our outlook.

About four or five years ago, I was at the Delhi airport, to catch a flight to Kolkata. The security guard there was watching me intently. When I had entered the security area, he made a comment to the people who had come to see me off. "Who made this poor young man a Baba so early in life?" he asked. From his viewpoint, the Shanishchara had an unhappy effect on my life; and in my opinion, it had brought me happiness.

The same astrologer told me, "The Shanishchara continues to influence you. It has caused you to shift from place to place. First, it made you leave your home. Then it made you leave Benares. Then it made you leave the place where you lived with Baba." Now, only he knows what else he'll make me leave, but he certainly propelled me forward every time. – he never pushed me back. So, it depends on our mind, whether a star brings unhappiness or good fortune. If I were to weep and lament about Shanishchara making me leave my home and family, it would make me catch my head and grieve. But I am happy that I left home. I used to watch – I have two elder brothers, and though one shouldn't speak about one's personal life, I do so to make a point – I saw the problems they faced. I'm telling you the truth. I am aware of the problems faced by those who lead a family life.

Pundit Ramkinkarji Maharaj said that one day somebody told him that Tulsidasji would not have been the great poet he was, had his wife Ratnavali not rebuked him so harshly. She scolded him so much that he developed detachment. Punditji have a beautiful reply. "Had it been his wife's scolding which made Tulsidasji what he was, there should have been a few more Tulsidasjis by now!" I don't know about the situation here, but in the villages, husbands are even beaten by angry wives. I saw one woman, who used to beat her husband, but he never became a Tulsidas! Nobody becomes Tulsidas because of the behavior of their wife. The Lord sometimes makes someone His instrument – that is all.

So, these stars do not give sorrow – it is the imagination of the mind. Some time back I was very ill. The Doctor forbade me to study, or to teach. In those days, I

did not give discourses. I would study and I would teach. The Doctors forbade both these activities. It is possible that some star was malevolent for that one year. I don't know, because I didn't show anyone my palm. Nor do I have a horoscope. Now there is nobody amongst my relatives who will make my horoscope either. This is a Grace of Thakurji.

Now, that year, when I could neither study nor teach, I had the opportunity to associate with many great Mahatmas. It seemed to me that that period was a very fortunate one for me. It helped me to progress spiritually. I would go to Ayodhya, or Gorakhpur – Shri Radhababa was there, at that time, Sitaramdevji Maharaj was there. I met Pundit Ramkinkarji Maharaj, Pujya Satyanandji Maharaj – I met all these great Saints. There would be discussions about sadhana – how to achieve spiritual progress. I doubt if I could have benefited as much, by studying for a year. So – that period of sickness – was it sorrowful, or did it bring me great joy? It was filled with happiness! Even today, I feel that Ishwara sent this illness to help me. I would, perhaps, not have received all the blessings of all those Saints otherwise, nor had the chance to listen to their experiences.

So, if the stars are malevolent, they will – at most – cause you financial losses, or sickness. Isn't this what they do? Well, you can gain advantage from your sickness. Associate with holy people, do sadhana. If the doctor orders a month of bed rest, it is a matter of great joy! Enjoy yourself. Do bhajan freely. Think about the Lord; mediate upon Him. In your normal life, you don't get the time to do all this. Even if you wish to spend a month in bed, your family members won't let you. They won't give you food! Now that the doctor has ordered you to lie in bed, do so, and enjoy yourself.

There was a great Mahatma in Vrindavan, called Kokil Sai. One of his family members was called Gehiramji. I have seen Gehiramji – he used to come to our Maharajji. He would think of Shri Krishna and start dancing. Sometimes, our Maharajji would also get up to dance. They would dance on all sides. He was a Sindhi – a great devotee, with a deep love for the Lord. Our Maharajji would ask, "Why are you dancing?"

"Banke Behari has recognized me," he'd reply.

"Any proof?"

"Yes," he said. He had a large factory in Sindh. "There was a big loss at the factory," he said. "We opened another factory, but that also closed down. So did the third. I was forced to come to Vrindavan, since there was nothing for me to do there.

When I came to Vrindavan, and had a taste of the joys of Vraja, and the association of Saints, I felt that the loss in my factories was not because of my past deeds. It is Banke Behari who caused these losses. It is His Leela, to bring me here." Later on his factories revived, but he never again left Vrindavan.

So, what can the grahas do to you? Just tell me! It can either cause physical ill-health, or it can cause a financial loss. Can it do anything else? Well? We say that the stars are against us, but if we utilize the situation (caused by the stars) to our benefit, will the situation caused by the grahas be a curse, or will it turn into a blessing? It will become a blessing – if you choose to use it well. So, then. are your joys and sorrows caused by stars or are they caused by you?

Let us return to the subject – the astrological planets cannot cause us anguish or elation. Only your mind can do so. The stars can create situations, and so can other people, so can the Devtas – but none of them can give sorrow or happiness. It is only your mental attitude which has this power.

Na karmaha – our scriptures generally propound the principle that our joys and sorrows are the result of our past karma. "We reap what we sow." It is a good principle. The actions of the past lives affect this life, and our actions of this life will affect our future lives. However the Bhikshu Brahmin states that past karmas can give you fruits – but the happiness or sorrow you feel, is because of your mind – they are not related to your actions.

Take it that you had some bad karma, and as a result, you got a son who is very bad. This becomes karma-fala – the fruit of karma. But, was Anga's son, Bena, wicked or was he noble? He was wicked. Did this please Anga, or did it distress him? Did he see it as a Grace of God, or did he see it as a great misfortune? Anga felt happy. So, then, where did the karma-fala succeed in giving sorrow? Anga is happy. "I got such a son, that I developed detachment," he said. The fruit of the prarabdha was a son – but the son was unable to cause sorrow or joy. Anga was not made unhappy by having been given a wicked son. He was pleased. He was happy.

That was the fruit of the prarabdha. Now, what about the *kriyamaana-karma*? Kriyamaana karma means the actions which our Dharma tells us to do.
See the incident in Arjuna's life. At the beginning, he thought, "How can I kill Bhishmapitamah? It will be a great sin. I will be killing Bhishmapitamah and Dronacharya, and so many other relatives. Not only will it be a great sin, it will result in social disruption. It is better that I leave the battlefield, and go into the forest." Arjuna considered it right to leave the battlefield. He considered it right to make this sacrifice. However, when the Lord Shri Krishna explained the right perspective, he killed all his enemies.
Towards the end, when Arjuna was fighting with Karna, he again had some doubts about what was the right thing to do. The wheel of Karna's chariot was stuck in the muddy ground. "Kill him," ordered Shri Krishna – *kriyamaana karma.* Arjuna felt that it would be against Dharma to kill an unarmed man, and the fruit of adharma is sorrow. Arjuna's hands remained still. Then Shri Krishna said, "I will explain the definitions of Dharma and adharma later. Kill Karna now!"
Karna said, "You have descended to establish Dharma, and yet you are advocating adharma in war?"
Shri Krishna countered Karna's question with another question. "Where was your Dharma, when you saw Draupadi being publicly disrobed, and remained silent? The young Abhimanyu was killed against the tenets of Dharma, by seven great warriors, of which you were one. Where was your Dharma when you participated in that adharma? Now that your life is in peril, you speak of Dharma?"
Arjuna remembered that Karna was one of those who had killed Abhimanyu in an unfair manner. He understood that Karna had violated Dharma first. Arjuna's doubts about what was right were laid to rest. Earlier, he was reluctant to kill Karna, because of the sorrow which would result from his action. When he understood that it was not against Dharma to obey the Lord, he killed Karna at once.
So, even the Kriyamaana Karma gives sorrow and joy. Or, is it the way we think? When Arjuna thought in a different way, he felt unhappy. The Lord Shri

Krishna changed Arjuna's view point, and Arjuna felt elated. The action was the same – where does it cause sorrow or joy?

Please don't misunderstand me, and think that I am refuting the principle of karma! I do not refute the principle of karma at all. What I say is that the karmas do give their fruits, but – whether they are prarabdha karmas, from past lives, or sanchit karmas, accumulated over many births – they can give fruits, but how they affect you depends entirely upon yourself, and the way you think.

Just see the kinds of situations which come up. It was during the same Mahabharata war, that Duryodhan told Bhishmapitamah, "You are a great warrior. You have the boon of dying only when you wish to, so nobody can kill you. I feel very perturbed that you have not yet killed a single Pandava."

Thus rebuked, Bhishmapitamah took out five arrows from his quiver, and kept them aside. "I take a pledge that I have kept these arrows aside for the Pandavas," he said.

The Pandavas were unaware of this pledge, but Shri Krishna was restless. Any danger for His devotees disturbs the Lord.

Duryodhan's wife used to go every morning, to bow down to Bhishmapitamah, before the break of dawn. Bhishmapitamah would be seated in meditation. He would utter his blessings without opening his eyes. The Lord Shri Krishna thought of a way to protect His beloved Pandavas from their Grand Sire. He woke Draupadi up, just before it was time for Duryodhan's wife to go to Bhishmapitamah. The Lord said, "Krishnaa, wake up quickly. There is some urgent work for you!"

Where will you find such a Master? The Bhakta sleeps, and the Lord worries about his safety, and comes to wake him. He woke Draupadi and said, "Come with Me." Draupadi thought that the Lord is playing a joke, because He often joked with her.

"Shri Krishna," said Draupadi, "You are always joking."

"This is not a joke," said the Lord. "It is a serious problem. Just come with Me." Draupadi followed Him immediately.

I have heard this episode from Pujya Maharajji's lips. Draupadi's slippers squeaked, as she walked. Had the sound woken the people sleeping in the tents,

it would have created more problems. The Lord picked up the slippers, and tucked them under His armpit, and told Draupadi to follow Him.

He timed it in such a way that Draupadi reached just ten minutes before Duryodhan's wife's daily visit.

The Lord stood aside, telling Draupadi to bow down to Bhishmapitamah. When Draupadi touched his feet, Bhishmapitamah assumed that Duryodhan's wife had come as usual. He said, "Saubhagyavati bhava" (May you have the good fortune of your husbands outliving you.) His blessings were given.

Draupadi said, "Pitamah, is the pledge of yesterday true, or is today's pledge true?" Bhishmapitamah opened his eyes, and saw Draupadi standing before him. Tears fell from his eyes, as he realized how much the Lord loved His devotees. It is worth noting the reply he gave. Bhishmapitamah is one of the Lord's twelve greatest devotees. Bhishmapitamah said, "My daughter, neither will yesterday's pledge come true, nor will today's blessings be true. The truth is what the One, who brought you here, wants. Now – show Him to me – where is He? Where is He hiding? Let me have His vision early in the morning today! Where is that thief? Where is that beloved trickster?"

The purpose was achieved. The Lord Shri Krishna came and stood before Bhishmapitamah. Pitamah gave the five arrows, which he had kept aside the previous day for the Pandavas, to Draupadi.

The Lord played a trick. This is the episode. Such a great vow by Pitamah came to an end. However, did Bhishmapitamah feel any anguish? No, he did not. Why did it not cause anguish for Pitamah? Because the Lord had done it! It is the difference in thinking. If – during such a great war – someone tricks you on such an important matter, will you feel happy, or will you feel sad? Well, my brother – you'll feel sad, won't you? And here, Bhishmapitamah is filled with joy – "It is my Thakur who did this!"

Hence, any karma – even if it is the kriyamaana karma, or the prarabhdha karma, can give its fruit; but it can't give sorrow or joy. Sorrow and happiness are caused only by your own attitude, by the way you think.

Well, my brother, you do accept this, don't you?

MIND OVER MATTER – III

For the past two days, we have been giving thought to the topic of *¨Man ke` jeete` jeet, man ke` hare` haar"*. It is the state of our mind, which makes us feel 'on top of the world', or 'utterly defeated.' In other words, it is a matter of mind over matter, because it is the mind that really matters – not the adverse or favorable situations we face.

Perhaps you have now understood that the real victory (or defeat) depends upon our attitude. Well, my brother, you have understood, haven't you? If your mind is undaunted, you have emerged the victor – you have conquered the world. If you feel defeated, you have lost the battle of life. I hope this is clear. Now, today we have to understand, "How can we make the mind the winner?" or "How can we gain victory over our wayward mind?" or "How will the mind be totally inclined towards the Brahman or towards the Lord?" You can put it whichever way you like; they all mean the same thing.

The total spiritual purport of our scriptures is by no means restricted to ascetics living in the Himalayas – you must have observed this. Was Shri Krishna – the one who gave us the Gita – an ascetic living in the Himalayas, or was He a householder? And, was the main listener of Gita, Arjuna, an ascetic, or was he a family man? They were both householders; they were family men; they were Grihasthas. And, after listening to the Gita, did they retreat to the Himalayas, or did they fight the Mahabharata war? They fought the war. However, please don't misinterpret my words, and start fighting as soon as you get home! (Actually, that goes on, in any case!) Shri Krishna and Arjuna fought the Mahabharata war for the sake of Dharma, while our Mahabharata at home is for personal gains. Arjuna fought because the Lord ordered him to fight, for the sake of establishing righteousness.

So, good people, it is inaccurate when people say that the talks of Gnan, Vedanta and the Gita are only for the Mahatmas. Neither was the preacher of the Gita a Mahatma in saffron robes, nor was the listener. Well, my brother, was either of them a monk? My brother, the preacher had married sixteen thousand one hundred and eight times! Who can be a greater family man than Him? It's

true that Shri Krishna was the Bhagwan, the Lord Incarnate, and this was His Leela; but Arjuna was a householder as well. You cannot escape by saying that all this is for the Mahatmas, or for people living long ago. Why should you say this? Oh, for the one who has lost everything, it makes little difference whether he listens to the Gita or not. It is more important that the person caught up in the world listens to it. Is it not so? What I'm trying to say, is that some people have spread the wrong impression that all the Gnan-Vedanta-Bhakti is only for the Mahatmas, and not for householders. The fact is that they are principally for householders.

Those who are involved in worldly activities are the ones who have the greatest need of the analysis of the mind, given in the eleventh Canto of the Bhagwat. The minds of those who have withdrawn from worldly activities are untroubled, anyway. What mental dilemmas will people suffer from, when they spend their time living in the forest singing praises of the Lord? It is interaction with worldly people which causes mental unrest. My brother, it is the one who is about to drown, who needs a boat – not the one who has reached the shore!

What I mean is that it is the mind, which causes our sorrows and joys. If you start thinking deeply about this from today onwards, then you will remain unaffected by the inevitable setbacks of life. This is the only difference. No one has ever succeeded in becoming happy by controlling events. Remember this. I doubt if anyone, in present times, faces the kind of ups and downs faced by Shri Krishna.

Our Maharajji used to say, "Take a close look at the life of Shri Krishna." His six brothers were killed even before His birth; His parents were put into prison, before He was born. He was born secretly in prison, and taken stealthily, the same night, to Gokul. The Nandotsava celebration of His birth had to be done in secret at Gokul. He could not even live in Gokul for eleven years. He left Gokul, and went to Vrindavan, Nandgaon, Barsane and then to Mathura.

Then, when Shri Krishna ran away from Mathura, He went to Dwarka. He ran so much – more than any of you run! I doubt if you would have shifted to as many places, as the Lord Shri Krishna had to. And, Sir, the situation was such that Jarasandh set fire to the Girnar mountain, thinking that Shri Krishna would be burnt, wherever He may be on it. So, Krishna-Balaram took such a great

leap, that they landed at Dwarka. Can anyone leap so far? Such great leaps were possible in the Treta period. And, His life was such that the great Mahabharata war took place in His lifetime, and ultimately He had to destroy His own family. The sons He had reared so lovingly, born of wives He loved, and abducted, were destroyed at the hands of Krishna-Balaram. Can so many adverse situations arise in anyone's life?

Our Gurdev would say, "Had Shri Krishna so desired, none of this would have happened, because He was all-powerful. However, He wanted to show us that anyone who takes a human form has to face all kinds of adverse circumstances, even if it is the Lord. However, Shri Krishna's specialty was that His smile never left His face, no matter how adverse the situation." It is this that we have to learn from Him. Nobody can retain happiness by removing adverse circumstances. A person can be happy only by viewing the situation from a positive angle, taking a constructive direction, and cultivating a positive outlook.

Just see how many adverse situations rose in Meera's life. People were slandering her, her family members spoke ill of her, poison was sent to her, and snakes were sent to sting her. Did she retain happiness by changing the situation? Did Meera weep over it? Did she complain

Main to giridhar haatha bikaanee, aba honee hoye` so hoye`.

Happiness is not achieved by changing another person, nor is it achieved by altering the situation. Happiness is achieved by changing the attitude.

The question is – how can we change our attitude? How can we develop a positive mind? If you really wish to change you trend of thought, there are only two methods. The mind attached to the world gives sorrows and joys. However, if the same mind is attached to the Lord – if it becomes *bhagvadaakaara* – it will result in the end of your sorrows and joys. You can say Bhagvadakara or Brahmakara – there is not much difference in the meaning. Only the words are different. The point is, how can the mind be made to immerse itself into the form of the Lord? The Lord Shri Krishna has given the method in the Gita –

Abhyaase`na tu kaunte`ya vairaagye`na cha grihyate `.
(6. 35)
Abhyasa (habit) and vairagya (detachment). What does 'abhyasa' mean? Our Maharajji used to say, "If you have not yet decided what the goal of your life is, then your life as a human is being wasted." All of you, seated here, are Satsangis. You are familiar with religious discourses. I hope that many of you have decided upon your goal in life, and are walking on the path leading to that goal. However, I also feel that not everyone present would have decided what their aim is, in life. If each individual were to be asked, "Why are you living? What is your life's goal?" they would have to think about what they should say. Most people live like sheep. "We live as others live." Everybody is born, studies, either gets a job or does business, gets married, gets children, gets old, gets beaten, and dies. Isn't this what happens? There is little more in their lives than this. Isn't this like leading the kind of life lead by sheep in a herd? It is asked, in the Bhagwat, "What is the aim of life?" The answer – *Jeevasya tattvajigyaasaa* – the aim of a human life is to obtain the knowledge of the essence of the Brahman. The goal of all human beings is to know about the Lord – *tattvajigyaasaa* or *bhagvad jigyaasaa,* This 'Divya Path' organization – you heard from Kumari Sharmila about the vacuum they feel after their Father's passing away, and how the bhajans and Satsang they now organize, has filled the vacuum.
Why is this? A vacuum in life means a lack of direction. People think, "What should I do? I am confused!" The goal of life is – *jeevasya tattvajigyaasaa* – the purpose of life is to experience the (attribute-less) Brahman, or the Lord (with attributes).
Have you decided that this is your aim in life? If you haven't, do it now. The goal of the human life is being pointed out to you. Please don't feel offended, but even animals organize their lives. They procure food, and have offspring. What are you doing, beyond this, in your lives? The human beings have a higher intelligence, and greater skills, so they organize their lives a little better. And, these days, pet dogs get a better treatment than many humans do. They stay in an A.C. room, drive around in a car, and a couple of servants are hired to

take them for walks. Who takes dogs for walks? Humans do. Human beings take a dog for walks. Is the human at a higher level, or is a dog at a higher level? If a dog follows a human to guard him, then the human is more important; but when a man takes a dog for a walk, gives him a bath, and takes him to a doctor – then is the man the servant, or is the dog his servant? Please don't be offended by this question.

So, what are you doing today? What is the goal of your life? Is this the only goal you have? Look, one should develop the capacity to hear some harsh talk in Satsang. Our Guruji used to say, "One meaning of the word Guru is 'the one who growls occasionally'." Do you know what growling means? It means to scold. The disciple's progress will be hindered if the Guru only shows affection. It is necessary to give an occasional rap on the faults, to get rid of them. Moreover, the person who is not able to endure the scolding of his Guru is not likely to gain spiritual benefits – remember this as well.

What are you doing today, as a human being? Have you ever thought about this? You wake up in the morning, and rush through your daily routine. "Where are my keys? Send for the lift!" Your life has no peace. If you ask anyone about their routine, they say, "I don't have time to die!" Do you think that Dharmaraj will ask for your permission, whether you have the time, and then send Death?! If anyone says, "Come to the Satsang; there is a discourse going on," they'll say, "I don't have the time even to die, Sir!" The problem these days are such that they hold two phones to their two ears! Only they know how they cope! A gentleman had three mobiles. I asked him, "Now, where is your third ear, for the third phone?" Two ears may be used for two phones, but what will he do, when the third one rings? Where will he attach it – to his nose, or mouth? What problems their lives have! It is all very well to be busy, but business is not the goal of our lives.

The Shastras give some strictures for Grihasthas (the Grihastha Ashram is the second stage of life). People between the ages of twenty five and fifty are considered to be Grihasthas. They enter the Vanaprastha Ashram when they reach fifty one. The Shastras say that Grihasthas should keep aside two hours for the Lord, no matter how busy they are.

What activities should be done in these two hours? It states that one hour should be spent in Satsang – hearing discourses about the Lord, and one hour for personal sadhana (like chanting verses in praise of the Lord, doing japa, or ritual worship). Unless you do this, you will be full of regrets in your old age. Please make a note of this. You may be a multi-millionaire, or a billionaire, or a Prime Minister, it makes no difference. You have to give this time daily while you are still young and in the prime of your life. Nothing much can be achieved in old age. The old can't hear properly, they can't see properly, and they say that they can't understand what Swamiji is saying! Those who don't give time for the Lord when they are young are destined to regret it, and weep, when they grow old. This means that human beings should start spiritual activities like bhajans and Satsangs, when young.

Let us return to our topic – how can we retain mental equilibrium? How can we attach the mind to the Lord? It is this mind, which is at the root of all our perplexities and also all our achievements. If your mind is on the right track, you will be the most successful person. If, however, your mind is negative, then you will be the most confused person. The mind is responsible for both.

So, you must first decide what the goal of your life is. If it is to amass wealth, then that is not the ultimate goal of a human being. 'Artha' (wealth) is one of the four Purusharthas (human achievements), but remember, it is only one of four. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha are the four Purusharthas. The first Purushartha is Dharma. Artha comes after Dharma. Then comes Kama, and ultimately, Moksha. And, what is Moksha? Moksha is another name for the Brahman. It is another name for the Atma. If you talk in the language of the saguna (with attributes), it is another name for Rama.

Rama brahm paramaartha roopa. In the language of the saguna, Moksha is the name of Shri Rama, and Shri Krishna. So, what is the ultimate achievement of life? Is it Artha, or is it Moksha? It is Moksha! The achievements start with Dharma, and end with Moksha. Artha and Kama come in-between.

Why do Artha and Kama come in-between? They come in-between because wealth is needed to do Dharma. A Grihastha needs wealth to carry out his duties, to educate his children, to maintain his status in society, etc. However, one should not get carried away by making money beyond what one needs.

The Kama Purushartha does not mean what people generally understand by the word Kama. Kama means desire for the things needed for a happy life. If the weather is cold, you need warm clothes. If you are hungry, you need food. To meet the necessities of life is what the achievement of Kama signifies.

And, do you know what the fulfillment of Kama is? It is written in the Bhagwat, that the fulfillment of Kama is to be free of all desires! It is not the fulfillment of all desires. If you can free yourself from all desires and longings, then you have attained the Kama Purushartha. On the other hand, if your desires have only increased, then your Kama Purushartha has failed miserably. Remember this.

So, your body should be healthy, in order to obtain the benefits of Satsang – not for you to go to the Club! It is written here, that the reason for wanting good health is to enable you to do Satsang and sadhana, and serve the people – do good in the world. This is the purpose of the Kama Purushartha. The purpose of the Artha Purushartha is to do Dharma and maintain your family. Because, if you are a householder, and you neglect your duties to your family, it will be considered an offence, and you will incur sin.

The scriptures state that it is a sin, if the father stops looking after his son, until the son is earning and married. Please remember that it is also a sin when a father refuses to hand over the keys to a mature and responsible son.

The biggest problem is between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. Our Guruji told us about a Mahatma's experience, when he went to ask for food. It was in some village. The mother-in-law had gone somewhere – maybe to bathe in the river. The daughter-in-law was at home. She said, "Maharaj, the food is not cooked yet. Please come after two hours."

The Mahatma said, "Very well," and went off. On the way he met the Mother-in-law, who asked him where he was coming from.

"I had gone to your house," replied the Mahatma.

"Then why are you going back?" she asked.

"Because your daughter-in-law told me that the food is not yet cooked. She asked me to come back after two hours," replied the Mahatma.

"Please come with me," said the lady. She returned to her house with the Mahatma, and entered it. Five minutes later, she came out and said, "Maharaj, it will take an hour for the food to be ready."

The Mahatma chided her gently. “Why did you make me walk back all this way?” he asked. “I knew that the food is not yet ready. You wasted an hour of my time unnecessarily.”
The Mother-in-law said, “It is my right to say when the food will be ready. My daughter-in-law has no right to say it. This is why I made you turn back.”
If both ladies become equally adamant and unreasonable, they will quarrel endlessly.
The indication is, live like a Manager in your house, not as its owner. The owner is Thakurji, and you stay as His manager. Thakurji says, “I will give you retirement at the age of fifty.” It is written in the Bhagwat. The Government gives retirement at the age of sixty. “Why do You give retirement at fifty?”
Thakurji is very kind, very compassionate. The Government gives you retirement when you are no longer fit to work. The Lord says, “I give you retirement at fifty, so that you can do something for your {É®ú±ÉÉäEò *paraloka* (the post-death realms you will go to).” Take retirement while you are still healthy enough to do something worthwhile. I concede that fifty years is not binding. It could be fifty two, or forty nine, or fifty five. However, when your children are able to take up the responsibilities, you can become a Vanaprastha, leading a semi-retired life. If you feel that you cannot trust your children to look after you in your old age, keep aside the amount you may need, and leave the rest for them to take care of.
Do you think that you will always look after your children? Who will look after them when you are no more? Who looks after the children whose parents die when they are still babies. Both my parents passed away when I was seven. And, Goswami Tulsidasji’s parents died just after he was born. Who looked after him? Who brought him up? Don’t have this false vanity of “What will happen if I’m not there?” This is just the false ego people have.
The goal of your life is Moksha. Your goal is not to just earn money and care for your family. These are side goals; one of the duties of life. Carry it out, and leave it. The ultimate goal is the Lord, and immersing your mind in Him. You may say, “This is why we come to Prempuri Ashram, and hear discourses, What more can we do?”

Look, if you want to attach your mind to the Lord, you will have to think about the psychological and the scriptural viewpoints. The whole world around us is made by the three gunas – sattvaguna, rajoguna and tamoguna. If you are observant, you will notice that when you are in a state of sattvaguna, you are better able to absorb the discourses, your mala is done with greater concentration, and your *path* (routine recitation of religious passages) is also done with great devotion. Moreover, you are able to meditate better. The Dharma of sattvaguna is enlightenment and knowledge. All this is written in the Gita. You were told, on the first day, that the mind should be kept in the sattvaguna since birth. It has become tamoguni – it is filled with sloth, ignorance, and the darkness of nescience. Make it satvaguni again.
What is the method to make the mind satvaguni? There are ten methods. There is a shloka in the thirteenth chapter of the eleventh canto of the Bhagwat – you can look it up. Ten methods are given, for making the mind satvaguni –

Aagamopaha prajaa de`shah kaalah karma cha janma cha,
Dyaanam mantrotha sanskaaro dashaite` gunahe`tava`h.
(11. 13. 8)
1) Aagam means: what do you read and hear?
2) Apah means: what do you eat and drink?
3) Prajaa means: what kind of company do you keep? What type of friends do you have?
4) Desha means: where do you stay? The place has its own influence. Half your mind moves automatically towards the Lord when you enter Prempuri Ashram; but if you go to the wrong place, your mind will move towards the wrong things.
5) Kaalah means: time also plays an important part.
6) Karma means: what do you do?
7) Janma means: what kind of a family are you born into? This also has a great influence on you.
8) Dhyaanam means: what do you meditate upon? What is your mind preoccupied with? Your mind will gradually take on the form of the object of your thoughts.

9) Mantra means: what kind of a mantra do you chant?
10) Sanskara means: the tendencies from your past lives, inherited from parents, and the factors which influence your attitude.
Now see from the beginning – there are ten factors for increasing the sattvaguna in your mind.
1) Aagam means: What you read and what you hear. What kind of literature appeals to you? Do you read books about great Mahatmas, do you read the Gita, Bhagwat, Ramayana, etc? Do you read novels, or do you read about contemporary talk about petty cheating? What do you read? Read satvaguni books, and listen to satvaguni talk. This is the first method.
Read the Gita-Bhagwat-Ramayana, etc.
Do you know that if you recite some verses with devotion – for instance, if you recite verses from the Ramayana – then the forms of what you chant will begin to take shape in your mind? I have seen this. The facial expressions change, and show the state of mind. If you read about the sorrow of Sitaji's separation, tears will come to your eyes. If you read out a happy event, you will begin to smile. So then, was the mind made sattvaguni by what you read, or not? It was.
This is not just a discourse. It is practical guidance. What you read, and what you listen to, does have an effect on your mind. Read good books, even if they don't interest you. You will find that gradually you are beginning to enjoy them.
There are many people in our village, who chew tobacco. When they introduce tobacco to someone, the person usually starts vomiting. The new comers hate the taste of tobacco – they say it's horrible! The habitual chewers persuade them to have it one more time. Gradually, the same persons who vomited it out become addicted to the habit. I have seen some of them; they become desperate to get tobacco to chew. High officers ask their bearers for tobacco. They forget the dignity of their position. So, if a worldly person can start enjoying something as bitter as tobacco – by taking it repeatedly – then won't it become a sweet addiction, if you repeatedly chant the Lord's praises, and hear discourses on Him? It is bound to have an effect. The sweet pleasure this gives will induce you to continuously read and listen to talk about the Lord.
Be watchful – read literature which is sattvaguni, and listen to sattvaguni talk. You will be forced to hear some worldly talk in your daily interaction, but

whenever it is possible to avoid, please fold your hands and beg pardon; or make some excuse to escape. If you can think of nothing else, say that you need to go to the toilet! This will not be considered a sin. I take the responsibility for this. If you tell a lie to save yourself from worldly talk, you will not incur the sin of telling an untruth. This is written in the episode of 'Bhagwatdharma' – the Dharma of the Lord.

Our Maharajji used to say, "If someone throws a basket full of garbage in front of your door, you will quarrel with him for ten days. Yet you show respect to those who fill both your ears with garbage?"

And, what happens then? You start savoring the garbage. You forget that it is raining; you forget how hot it is. It is quite probable that you don't concentrate as much on your mala, as you do, on the gossip you listen to. "What happened after that? What did they say?" And – as for women – God save us! Someone asked me yesterday, if I would like to see the eighth wonder of the world. Look here; please don't be offended, because you are protected by law. The man said, "Shall I show you the eighth wonder of the world?"

"What is it?" I asked.

"If two ladies are sitting together peacefully, that it the eighth wonder of the world!"

I find it impossible to follow this gossip. They will go on gossiping past midnight, past one o'clock and tow o'clock in the morning – their gossip never ends! Oh, save yourselves from such talk. Look, the path to the Lord does not differentiate between men and women. Devhuti was a woman, wasn't she? There would be hardly any man who had such renunciation.

Parataa poshya de`hah – it is written that her body had reached such a condition, that her hair was matted. She would eat only if someone fed her – otherwise, she was unaware of whether she had eaten or not. She was a woman, and so was Draupadi. Wasn't Uttara a woman, too? All of them were women. On the path to the Lord, there is no discrimination between men and women.

So, the first method is Aagam. Aagam means literature, as mentioned before. What you read and what you hear affects you, so be careful. Listen to sattvaguni talk, and read sattvaguni literature.

2) The second method is ‘Apa’. Apa means water. Water is a symbol; it also means food. What do you eat? All this is written in the Gita. The items which are extremely sour, or bitter, are rajoguni foods. Malodorous foods like garlic and onions, and non-vegetarian items, stale food, or ‘jootha’ (made impure by touch) are all Tamasik foods. One can avoid eating garlic and onions and non-vegetarian foods, but to save ourselves form jootha food is very difficult. Most meals these days are buffets, where people despoil the food by touching it with spoons or hands, with which they are eating. They keep their shoes on, when they eat, hold their plate, and help themselves. At least here, at Prempuri, the decorum has been maintained. There are people to serve the food, to ensure it doesn’t become jootha. All of you read the Gita. The word =ÎSUô¹]õ ‘*uchchishta*’ is used there, as Tamasik food.

You are gradually forgetting your culture, in the blind aping of Western culture. All of us have to face the harmful effects of this. And, what happened? Neither did we become completely Westernized, nor did we retain our Indian culture. We are left hanging in the middle. See the good qualities of the West. The people there are punctual, they carry out their duties sincerely, they are hard working, and they do not try to cheat or play tricks. Their countries are far ahead of us, by materialistic standards.

And here? If the Government sanctions one crore for welfare, so much will be siphoned off down the line that we can consider it a Grace of God, if one lakh reaches the people it is meant for! Otherwise, all of it will be shared amongst the middle men. These people are so good at distribution – God save us from Government departments! When I was studying at Vrindavan, I went to get a license for a motor cycle. I had a motor cycle to go to school. The fee for the license was thirty five rupees. The man asked me for a hundred and fifty rupees. I told him, “Brother, the fees are thirty five. Take fifty or – at the most – take sixty rupees from me. How can you charge me a hundred and fifty?”

“Oh, go away,” he said. “You will have to give a test when the RTO comes, and – if you pass – you can take the license.”

I was just leaving, when another man told me that the RTO would never pass me. So, I went back in, and asked the man why he was asking for a hundred and

fifty. He got annoyed with me. “I told you to go away, and give the test. Don’t give me the money!” he said.
I thought to myself, “This man is taking a bribe and also scolding me. What can the reason be?” I said again, “Brother, you are asking for a hundred and fifty for a license worth thirty five, then why are you scolding me?”
The man said, “It is not for me alone. Everyone has a share. I only do the collection.”
What will you do? This is the state of affairs in our country. It is not so in Western countries. There is some corruption, but not as much as here. So, if we learn anything from them, we should learn their good habits.
So, our intake should also be sattvik. Jootha comes in the Tamasik category of foods; so do foods with a strong smell, non-vegetarian foods, and liquor. Foods which are heavily spiced, sour, and bitter, come under the rajasik category. People go on eating them, with watering eyes and dripping noses!
Foods like milk, curds, butter, sugar, ghee and sweets, are all sattvik foods, shunned by most people these days. Can anyone have milk, sugar, ghee and sweets, these days? Either people avoid them voluntarily, or they are forbidden by their doctor. Even if they have milk, they remove the cream. Oh, this is the item worth eating!
Keep one thing in mind. What is that? It is also written in the Gita, that we should have only as much sattvik food, as can be easily digested. If you have too much, the doctor will have to tell you to stop. So, moderate your intake.
There was a Mahatma at our Ashram, who would ask for rotis, whenever there was a Bhandara. He would not have the fried puris which were made for the feast, because his digestion was weak. Maharajji told us about this. One day, Udiyababaji Maharaj called him, and said, “Brahmachari, everyone is having puris, then why are you bothered about rotis?”
“Maharaj, I can’t digest puris,” replied the Mahatma.
Baba said, “I’ll tell you how you can digest puris.” Listen to the method. Everyone here is listening very eagerly, because digestion is a major problem these days! There is a lot of food, but people can’t digest much.

Baba told him the method. He didn't tell the Mahatma about any medicine. He said, "If you have an appetite for eight puris, eat only four. Come to me if you have any trouble with your digestion. It is my responsibility."
You can eat anything, provided you maintain a limit. Have a little, if you are told to avoid something. Had you controlled yourself earlier, perhaps the need to control you diet now, would have been avoided. So, our food should be satvaguni.
III. Praja: The third factor is company. '*Jaisaa kare` sang vaisaa lage` rang.'* (People are colored by the company they keep.) If you come to Prempuri, you will begin to enjoy Satsang and bhajans. If you go to the wrong places, you will start enjoying the wrong things. You will say that you enjoy both kinds of activities – what is the truth? Where is the real *rasa* (pleasure)? So, understand this also – *rasa* is neither here, nor there. *Rasa* is where the mind gets focused, and you get a glimpse of the reflection of your Atma. You experience pleasure then. Bliss is the nature of the Atma, and you get a flavor of that bliss when the Atma's reflection shines in your mind. You think that the pleasure comes from an external source. So, you have to make the external source a sattvik one. Take pleasure only from good activities. Don't allow any wrong activity to be the source of your pleasure. This is what I wish to convey.
You will begin to enjoy the katha-bhajans (discourses and holy music), if you keep coming to Prempuri; and you will begin to enjoy the worldly life, if you go to the Clubs. It surprises people to hear this, but why would they go there, if they didn't enjoy it? They get pleasure there, too. However, the feeling of enjoyment comes from within. When the source of the joy is actually inside us, why make the wrong medium your choice for tapping it? Choose a good medium. Choose the katha, choose dhyana (meditation), and choose bhajan. And then see. If you don't get pleasure – come to me. That is why it is said – *prajaa sangati* – company is important.
Make friends with people who will inspire you towards good things. Our Maharajji would say, "If you wish to progress, keep the company of people who are ahead of you. Don't keep the company of people who are inferior to you." It is harmful for us to be with those who are inferior. By 'those who are ahead of you', I refer to those who have a greater peace of mind, those who do more

bhajans, worship with greater devotion, etc. I refer to those whose activities are aimed at spiritual fulfillment, and who realize how much they have to be thankful for. Keep the company of such people.

You may have heard our Maharajji speak about this – there was an ordinary man. See how Laxmi (the Goddess of wealth and grace) comes and leaves at her own sweet will. When wealth comes, it comes in a way we can't understand. And, when it goes, it goes suddenly, and we don't understand why it went. Now, this man suddenly became wealthy. When he became wealthy, he began to keep the company of the rich people, and going to the Club. Then, he became a Member of the Club. Now, I do not say that Clubs have only the wrong kind of activities, but when he became a Member, people told him that he should come to the Club regularly. He began to go regularly to the Club. Then his friends told him to join them in having something to eat. He replied that he only had home-cooked food. So, his friends suggested that he get fruits from home, and have them. He started doing this.

The friends then suggested, "Why carry the fruits all the way from home? We'll send for them." Now, see the effect of money. The use of money depends on the kind of source it is earned from. In many Ashrams it is seen that bales of cloth are stored. They rot, and have to be thrown away. It is a complete waste. Neither was money used for food, nor for clothing which could be used. I had made a comment, once, when some cashew nuts and almonds turned rancid, that they must have been bought with bad money. Had they been bought with clean money, they would have been used by someone or the other. It depends upon the kind of money which is used.

Now, when the man started to eat the fruits procured by the Club, his thinking changed bit by bit. People persuaded him to eat *falaahaara* (special cereal-free food), and then he started eating other dishes. You know the result. He began to drink, and dance, and participate in all the wrong activities.

What is your company like? Keep the company of good people. If you wish to be a Bhakta, keep the company of Bhaktas. If you wish to be a Vedanti, keep the company of Vedantis. If you wish to walk on the path to the Ishwara, keep the company of those who walk on the same path.

IV. Desh: What kind of place do you stay in? The kind of neighbors you have, also affects you, to some degree. How will you sleep early, if your neighbors have rowdy late night parties? If you wish to wake up at four a.m., you must go to bed at ten p.m. Otherwise, how will you wake up early in the morning? Nor can you forbid your neighbors to have late night parties. So, what kind of a place do you live in?

It is the Grace of Swami Prempuri Maharaj, and our Gurudev, that there is a place like the Prempuri Ashram in Mumbai. People have the chance to listen to so many great Saints and Mahatmas, understand the importance of Satsang, and listen to discourses. This means that you don't have to leave Mumbai and go to far away places, to obtain Satsang. Who has the time, in a city like Mumbai, to go to far away places to listen to Satsang, anyway! Everything is available here. So, as far as possible, try to live in a place which is conducive for spiritual progress. It is very helpful if good people live near your residence.

V. Kala: Now, come to the factor of Kala – Time. If you wake up at eight o'clock, and then start to do *paatha* (reading of religious passages), your mind will automatically become rajoguni (restless) or tamoguni (filled with sloth). But, it will be sattvaguni, if you wake up at four or five in the morning. You can start tomorrow and see for yourself. However, to wake up at four or five a.m., you have to go to sleep by ten p.m. If you wake up so early, and go to sleep past midnight every day, you will fall sick. You need at least six hours of sleep. This is why our culture recommends going to bed early, and waking up early. The Western culture is to sleep late, and wake up late.

I stay at 'Vipul', and we generally wake up at four or five in the morning. The lights are put on, and the activities result in some little noises. The gentleman who lives in the next door flat smilingly asked me one day, "Babaji, what do you do, when you wake up at four in the morning?"

"What do you think we do?" I asked.

The man repeated, "You wake up at four o'clock, put on the lights, and there is some noise. What is it that you do, so early in the morning?" This means that he could not imagine what we do! Because, there are so many who go to bed at four o'clock in the morning! There would be many people here, in your Mumbai, who go to sleep around four a.m. Now, this is just the opposite of our

culture, isn't it? And, the sarcastic comment of our scriptures, for people with such habits, is '*nishaayaam charati'*. Do you know what that is? It is 'nishachara'. (Demons are also called Nishacharas.) A Nishachara is one who is awake at night, and sleeps during the day. They go to bed at the Brahmamuhurtha, at four a.m.!

Our Maharajji would tell us humorously, about a man who came and asked him, "Do you know when I get up?"

"When do you get up?" Maharajji asked the man.

"I get up when I see the Sun God at my window," he said.

"I see," said Maharajji. "That must be around seven or eight o'clock?"

"No, Maharaj," replied the man. "My window faces West." Have you understood what this indicates? If the window faces West, it means that he must be waking up in the evening. He would probably be going to bed at four or five in the morning!

This is a true incident – a devotee from Delhi came to our Ashram. His habit was to wake up at eight o'clock. Now, the Thakurji did a Leela, and his lifestyle changed a little, after that day, too. Those who have come to our Anand Vrindavan Ashram know that there are some rooms next to our Shankarji's temple. This gentleman was given a room there. Aarti is done at four thirty a.m. in summer, and five a.m. in winter. Drums are beaten so loudly during the Aarti, that the sound can be heard all over the Ashram. So, the noise woke this gentleman. He tried to muffle the sound by putting a pillow over his head, but the noise was too loud, and he couldn't go back to sleep. So, he got up, and decided to take a walk in the grounds. Our Ashram is quite large. There is no need to go out for a walk. One can have a good walk inside the grounds of the Ashram. Every round inside is nine meters.

The gentleman said, "That day, when I took a walk at five a.m., I enjoyed it so much, that I got up on my own, the next day." He told me this himself. So, you can also try it and see. I tell you, don't do your mala when you wake up at four a.m. Drink a little water, wash your face and hands, and sit on a mat. You will effortlessly begin to meditate – the atmosphere has sattvaguna at that time. If you wake up at eight o'clock, you'll get no support in your Puja. If you wake up

at four or five in the morning, you will get the support of the atmosphere. You can try it and see. This is Kala.
VI. Karma: Your actions play a major role. What do you do, to enhance your mind? If you are involved in some wrong kind of business, then nineteen hours of business will cancel the benefits of one hour of Satsang. Let your business be of a decent kind, where you don't have to cheat, or indulge much in unethical practices. It is Dharma to do business, but what do people do? If they gave a couple of hours to serve the Lord, it would be excellent. If you say that you wish to do some seva, (selfless service) along with your sadhana-bhajan, then – if you don't have shraddha (faith) at home, come to Prempuri and do some seva. There is a great need for helpers here. Come to Vrindavan, and do seva. Do it anywhere – there is a dearth of helpers in every good work.
It you start giving one hour of selfless service as a daily routine – and provided there is no intention of personal gain – then you will begin to enjoy doing your mala, within six months or a year. Come to me, if that doesn't happen. Service for only one hour a day daily, not more, is needed. Take a resolve, "Let my Thakurji be pleased with my service; let my Gurudev be pleased with my seva."
Two points are very important for a sadhak. The first question Parikshit asked Shri Shukdevji, in the Bhagwat, was very beautiful. It is something worth learning. Parikshit asked, "What should we do, and what should we not do?" It is this, that we generally learn from great people – what we should do, and what we shouldn't do. Usually, people don't ask. And, if they are told, they don't listen. If you pour water into a pot which has a hole in the bottom, will the water be retained, or will it leak out? It will leak out. So, there is no progress, even when people do mala, or study Vedanta for twenty years! Why does this happen? Wrong activities result in the benefits of the sadhana leaking out. The plus-minus is equalized. So, Sir, serve unselfishly, and don't do what you don't want to do.
VII. Janma: Your birth makes a difference.

Shucheenaam shreemataam ge`he yogabhrashtobhijaayate`.
(Gita 6. 41).

Where does the Lord give the next birth, to those who are 'yoga bhrashta' (whose spiritual journey is incomplete when they die)? This was Arjuna's question to the Lord. "If someone walks on the path to You, but dies before he reaches You, what happens to that person's soul? Do you have any guarantee for him?"
The Lord answered, "I have a guarantee for him. It is I who will decide upon his next birth. His file is kept with Me. I will finalize where he is to be born next."
"Where do you give him birth?"

"*Shucheenaam shreemataam ge`he` yoga bhrashta* – he will be born in a spiritually elevated family."

10% of the tendencies come from parents, not 100%. Don't have the false impression that all your tendencies are inherited. The other tendencies are your own, of your prarabdha (fruit of deeds of previous births). From the time of your birth, about 20% of your mind is influenced by your mother and father. If they give you good teachings, it helps enormously in your spiritual development. The mother teaches – *shuddhosi buddhosi niranjanosi* (you are the pure, enlightened, eternal soul).
We have had such wonderful mothers – Sunitiji told Dhruvji, "Even if it is the throne you desire, go and do bhajan of the Lord." And here, Sir, if we ask them to send their sons to us for a month, they'll forbid us to enter their house! Many people tell me, "Your parents are fulfilled."
I ask, "Why?"
"Because you became a Mahatma so early in life. You started on the way to God," they say.
I tell them wryly, "If parents are fulfilled when their sons become Mahatmas, give me a son of yours." Is anyone ready for this? Please raise your hand, if any of you are ready. I will take him away tomorrow, for sure. People are happy when other people's sons become Mahatmas, but not their own son! If it is good, why don't you want your son to get the good also? This is the Lord's Maya!
So, where have you taken birth? What kind of a family do you have?

VIII. Dhyanam: What does your mind dwell upon? What do you think about? If you think about your enemy, his tendencies will gradually become strong in your life. Think about good people. Think about God. Don't let thoughts of the wrong kind of people occupy your mind.
Our Maharajji used to say something beautiful. He said, "The person who criticizes another a great deal, will criticize the faults of that person. He will speak about that person's bad temper, or of his greed, or his lust. What happens is that the faults of that man abide in the mind of the one who talks about them. Even if he does not have them they gradually take root in his mind." So, be careful. Don't let any wrong item or individual enter your mind. Let your thoughts and meditation be sattvik.

IX. Mantra: What is your mantra like? Is it sattvaguni, rajoguni, or tamoguni? You will ask, "Can a mantra be tamoguni?" Yes, the mantras of the Tantriks are tamoguni. Tantriks are destroyed by their Tantra Vidya (knowledge of Tantra). There was a great Saint. Tantra was his siddhi (supernatural achievement). He had acquired this gift from the Devi. The temple is called Pagla Baba Mandir. It is on the Main Road in Vrindavan. It is a very large temple – many of you may have visited it. That Baba had been blessed by the Kamakhya Devi. He had a hankie, and he would twirl this round the head of the person whose wishes he wished to fulfill. He had wealth worth crores.
A person who had been close to him, told me that once, some rich man had desired some very big task to succeed. Baba had pledged to Kali Ma, that he would offer her a human sacrifice, if that task was achieved. The task was achieved, but the rich man was unable to organize a human sacrifice for the Mother Kali.
Now, see what the result of Tantrik siddhis is like. This is a true story. The rich man could not arrange for the promised human sacrifice. Baba was a Tantrik, but he was a good person, and he wanted Vrindavan to flourish. When no sacrifice was offered, Ma Kali asked Baba, "What about my xÉ®ú ¤ÉÊ±É *nara bali*?" Baba used to talk to the Devi.

Baba said, “Mother, who am I to catch? The rich man did not bring anyone. Please accept me, as the sacrifice.” He gave up his body to keep his pledge.
So, mantras can also be tamoguni, rajoguni, or sattvaguni. Your mind will be molded according to your mantra. Did your Guruji give you a mantra of Ramji, Krishnaji, or Bhairavji, or of some ghost? Whose mantra have you been given? There are mantras for gaining control over spirits. However, those who go in for such ‘bhoot siddhi’ mantras, are destroyed by the bhootas they evoke. Remember this.
Is your mantra sattvaguni, rajoguni, or tamoguni? In the panchadev upaasana (worship of the five Gods) of the Sanatana Dharma, all the mantras are sattvaguni. There are mantras of Ramji, Krishnaji, Durgaji, Shankarji, Gopalji, and others. All of these are sattvaguni mantras. Which mantra do you chant?

X Sanskara: What are the sanskara (cultural inputs) given by your parents? Are they sattvaguna? What do your parents tell you to do when you wake up in the morning? “Son, bow down to Thakurji. Bow down to your father and mother. Bow down to the elders. You should not tell lies. Never deceive anyone. Be a good person all your life. Always remember that my name is connected to yours. If your reputation is spoilt, my name will also be tarnished.” This is the kind of teaching we should give our children. What kind of teaching do you give your children? What sanskaras do you give them? The sanskaras should be sattvaguni. Parents can give these inputs only when the children are young. When the children grow up, they cultivate their own sanskaras.
So, these are the ten methods for developing sattvaguna. These are external methods, which must be developed through your own actions. You can make them a part of your daily life. You can not force your mind to be immersed in the Lord, but you can cultivate these ten methods.
“Suppose the mind is not attached to the Lord, even after undertaking these ten methods? Suppose the mind does not develop the propensity to think of the Lord?”
I had asked a Saint in Ayodhya, “When does the mind completely take on the form of the Lord? How can this be achieved?” He told me about his life’s

experience. I asked, “Maharaj, how can the mind be filled completely with the Lord?” He gave a beautiful reply.
“Brahmachari,” said the Mahatma, “If a Jeeva tries his very best, he can achieve fifty percent success, in filling his mind with the Lord.” You have to use the ten methods given earlier, if you want to try your very best. These will not be done by the Ishwara. It is you who has to do this, to increase the sattvaguna in you. After giving your best effort, your mind will be only half filled with the Lord. “When the Lord sees the sincere efforts of His little child, He will be filled with compassion.” If you see that your little child is making a great effort to do something to please you, but is unable to achieve it fully, won’t you help him in completing the work? Well, my brother, won’t you help your child to succeed? Of course you will! Then, the Parampita Paramatma – who loves even His wicked children, even those who oppose Him – will undoubtedly help you. You have to first make plans about how to please Him. Then you have to make a sincere effort. The Saint said, “Then, the compassionate Paramatma is filled with mercy. ‘This child of Mine is striving so hard – I should help him to succeed.’ What will He do then?”
Pujya Radhababaji Maharaj said, “How can we experience the Grace of the Lord? Even I do not know the method for experiencing His Grace. I don’t know how it is done. However, the day you get the experience of His Grace, you will lose all interest in the world. Your mind will no longer have the capacity to go anywhere, except to immerse itself in the Lord.”
There was a great devotee, who came from Bengal. His name was Lalababu. The temple built by him is next to Rangji’s temple in Vrindavan. Every day, he would think, “When will the day come, when I will leave everything and go to Vrindavan? I will chant Radha-Krishna, Radha-Krishna all day long. I will take Madhukari (begged food) from the Brajvasis (people of the region of Braj) to sustain myself, and live in Vrindavan.”
Lalababu was sitting in his home one morning. His servant felt that the time for the daily bath is passing; it was getting late. Timidly, he asked Lalababu, “Babuji, the time is at hand.” That was enough! Lalababu felt that the Thakur of Vrindavan had used the medium of the servant to summon him. He did not even go to the bathroom. He got up and set off for Vrindavan. He sold all his

belonging, collected the money, and built a temple for the Lord. The temple is there, even now. It has been built just next to Rangji's temple. This happened a hundred and fifty or two hundred years ago. It happened within the Kali Yuga

The Praana Pratishtha (the ritual of invoking the Lord) was done. Lalababu loved the Lord deeply. He said, "The Praana Pratishtha is complete." It was the lunar month of Magh, during winter, and fresh butter was offered every day to the Lord. You know that the body is warm when the spirit abides in it. It gets cold as soon as the spirit leaves it. Lalababu thought, "Butter is offered every day to the Lord, and the Praana Pratishtha is also done. If the spirit had truly entered the Lord's form in the temple, it can be tested. Let me place butter on His head one day. The butter will melt if the Lord's head is warm."

The Bhakta was preparing to test the Lord, and the Lord was ready to accept the Bhakta. He was prepared to go through the test. Lalababu offered butter to the Lord in the temple, and also placed a small lump of butter on the head of the Lord's form. Then he stood back to watch.

Five minutes later, the butter began to melt. Tears poured from Lalababu's eyes. He fell flat at the Lord's feet. "Lord, I am guilty of a grave misbehavior! I tested You! You went through the test, to Grace me!" The love Lalababu had for the Lord grew deeper. He experienced bliss which was beyond description. His life was so extraordinary that even today, people want to emulate him. They read his books.

So, the fact is that you will have to use these ten methods. I assure you that the Lord will bring some event into your life, as He did for Lalababu. Then your mind will permanently take the form of Shri Krishna, or Shri Rama, or of the Brahman. You will experience unbroken bliss.

This is all the play of the mind, the Leela of the mind. Control it with relentless effort. The Lord said two things – *abhyaasa* and *vairaagya*. Vairagya means to reduce the importance of the world; and abhyaas means to do Satsang and bhajans as a daily routine. Abhyasa means to repeat; to do day after day. Continue with your daily efforts. If you struggle to reach Him, Thakurji will come to you. Have faith that your mind will be attached to the Lord.

May your mind be connected to the Lord. May the Lord accept you, and fill your life with happiness. With these words, I allow my voice to rest.